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ABSTRACT

Prepared for Unesco's Records and Archives Management Programme (RAMP), this study is intended to introduce workers in archival services to the life cycle concept of records, and to the advantages of establishing a legally authorized and comprehensive program for the orderly disposal of modern institutional records. It is noted that, although the study is based primarily on British, Canadian, Australian, and U.S. practices, the policies and procedures that are explained and summarized can be applied to the records of any public or private institution, and can be adapted to meet the needs of varying administrative traditions and recordkeeping practices. The introduction provides definitions of terminology used and a discussion of the importance and advantages of conducting records surveys. Individual chapters then address authority and control; various aspects of records surveys, including preparation, inventory of records series in individual agency departments, and appraisal; records retention authorization; records schedules; records disposal--the records center; and records scheduling for special categories, i.e., machine readable records, microforms, audiovisual records, and cartographic records. Summary guidelines on the materials presented in this document conclude the report. Twelve sample forms, a select bibliography, and a report on microcomputer use for records scheduling are included. (BBM)

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Records surveys and schedules: a RAMP study with guidelines

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RECORDS SURVEYS AND SCHEDULES:

A RAMP STUDY WITH GUIDELINES

prepared by

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General Information Programme and UNISIST

United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization

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PREFACE

The Division of the General Information Programme of Unesco in order to better meet the needs of Member States, particularly developing countries, in the specialized areas of records management and archives administration, has developed a long-term Records and Archives Management Programme - RAMP.

The basic elements of the RAMP programme reflect the overall themes of the General Information Programme. RAMP thus includes projects, studies, and other activities intended to:

1. Promote the formulation of information policies and plans (national, regional and international).
2. Promote and disseminate methods, norms and standards for information handling.
3. Contribute to the development of information infrastructures.
4. Contribute to the development of specialized information systems in the fields of education, culture and communication, and the natural and social sciences.
5. Promote the training and education of specialists in and users of information.

This study on records surveys and schedules is intended to introduce archival services to the life cycle concept of records, and to the advantages of establishing a legally authorized and comprehensive programme for the orderly disposal of modern institutional records. Although based primarily upon British, Canadian, Australian and US practice, the policies and procedures that are explained and summarized in this study can be applied to the records of any institution, public or private, and can be adapted to meet the needs of varying administrative traditions and record-keeping practices.

Comments and suggestions regarding the study are welcomed and should be addressed to the Division of the General Information Programme, Unesco, 7 place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris. Other studies prepared under the RAMP programme may also be obtained at the same address.

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William Benedon	Forms 3-5, 9-12
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Bethlehem Steel Corporation	Form 7
Australian Archives	Form 8

RECORDS SURVEYS AND SCHEDULES

A RAMP STUDY WITH GUIDELINES

1. Introduction

1.1 The basic terminology of any field of activity undergoing significant change is essentially unstable. This is particularly the case of records management and, to a lesser extent, of archives administration. Because the basic terms now in use have acquired a variety of meanings in different contexts and countries, this introduction indicates the particular meanings assigned to the terms used in this study. The definitions, in turn, are based upon those proposed in a glossary prepared by a working group of the International Council on Archives and scheduled for publication in 1984.

1.2 A record may be defined as 'recorded information, regardless of form or medium, received and maintained by an agency, institution, organisation or individual in pursuance of its legal obligations or in the transaction of business of any kind". This includes " any paper, book, photograph, microfilm, map, drawing, chart, magnetic tape or any copy or print-out thereof" (1).

1.3 Records management may be defined as "that area of general administrative management concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, maintenance and use, and the disposal of records during their entire life-cycle".(2) The life-cycle of a record is its progression from creation to final disposal. It includes the following phases:

1.3.1 Current records - records that are regularly used for the

current business of an agency, institution or organisation and continue to be maintained in their place of origin or receipt (sometimes called 'active' records);

1.3.2 Semi-current records - records that are required so infrequently for current business that they should be transferred to a records centre pending their ultimate disposal (sometimes called 'semi-active' records);

1.3.3. Non-current records - records no longer required for current business which should be either destroyed or transferred to an archival repository (sometimes called 'inactive' records);

1.4 Archives are non-current records preserved by the organisations responsible for their creation, or by their successors in function, or by an appropriate archives service, because they are of permanent value.

1.5 Numerous activities can be included within a broad definition of records management, such as word processing and the management of correspondence; the management of forms, reports, and directives (e.g. standing instructions and technical manuals); files classification and management, including the use of ADP, EDP and microform systems for the storage and retrieval of information; mail management; office machines and supplies management; centralised microform operations; records centre operations; vital records and archives preservation programmes.(3) Although it is possible to develop a records management programme by concentrating on any one of these elements, the key elements of a comprehensive programme are the records survey and the records schedule

which determine the retention and disposal of records. The basic information obtained by these means will greatly facilitate the development of improvements in records creation and maintenance and in particular, a records survey is an essential preliminary for the improvement of filing systems, which are the basis of good paperwork management.

1.6 A records survey has been defined as "the gathering of basic information about records regarding their quantity, physical form and type, location, physical condition, storage facilities, rate of accumulation, use and similar data for the purpose of planning acquisition and disposal programmes, microfilming operations, new facilities and related archival activities".(4) To this definition, which relates the survey solely to archival activities, should be added the purpose of better records management within the offices where the records were created.

1.7 A records schedule is a document describing the records of an organisation and authorising all the actions to be taken for their disposal. These include microfilming; file-breaks; their transfer to a records centre when they are semi-current, pending the completion of their periods of retention; and their destruction or transfer to an archival repository when they are non-current, generally after a specified period (30 years after their creation in the case of the public records of Great Britain).

1.8 It may be argued that surveys and schedules are elaborate ways of achieving what is, after all, a simple purpose, the destruction of records

or their transfer to archives. In reality the situation is quite otherwise. Where inadequate records schedules or none at all exist, the disposal of records will be unplanned and chaotic. Records will be retained in expensive office accommodation when they are semi- or non-current and even where basement or other holding areas exist, they are likely to be occupied by non-current records which should have been destroyed long since, thus effectively preventing the transfer of records from office accommodation. As has been noted;

> "unplanned retirement, unfortunately, is very widespread. It usually consists, initially, in the relegation of non-current records to out-of-the-way space in cupboards, corridors, attics, cellars and the like, in order to free office space for the latest current records. Then, when there is no remaining spare space even in the attics and cellars, and yet more space is required in the operating offices, the agency authorities often decide to destroy a greater or lesser part of the older records, usually on an arbitrary basis. The tendency toward this kind of thoughtless destruction has been greatly exacerbated by the typically greatly increased rates of records production in recent decades".(5)

1.9 The advent of microforms and more recently of the silicon chip has persuaded some organisations that the paper mountain can be reduced, if not eliminated altogether, through minaturisation or electronic data processing. Much time and money has been wasted in the past in microfilming records which should have been destroyed, if proper records schedules had been in effect. The assumption that it will be unnecessary in the future to pay much attention to the elimination of useless

information, because of the falling cost and increasing capacity of computer memories, is quite as dangerous, in that it can lead to the retention of useless information and the consequent overloading of computers. The end result will be that action equivalent to that already noted will be taken by agency authorities to destroy a greater or lesser part of the older data, usually on an arbitrary basis. The use of records surveys and the development of records schedules is, therefore, essential, whether the intention is the better management of paper records, the introduction of microforms and data processing or, as should be the rule in these times, to determine the optimum uses to which all three forms of record should be put, bearing in mind the need for the long term retention of some records on paper, although they may have been created in machine readable form.

1.10 The objectives of a records survey are, therefore, firstly, to ensure that records schedules are comprehensive and include all records and all forms of record and, secondly, to assist in the development of better systems of records management, without which records schedules may lose much of their value. The objectives of a records schedule are to plan the life of records from the time of their creation or receipt, to the completion of their life-cycle, either by destruction or preservation as archives. The advantages of a records schedule are that it:

1.10.1 saves time by reducing the volume of records which must be searched for information;

1.10.2 saves space by removing from the office records no longer in current use;

1.10.3 avoids additional costs for the purchase of storage equipment and the acquisition of floor space for records storage;

1.10.4 promotes efficient control over records;

1.10.5 identifies the valuable records for archival preservation.

The results of a records schedule are, therefore, fewer records, better records, more efficient records and more economical records.(6)

1.11 The Study and Guidelines are primarily designed for organisations with no records management function, but which may or may not have an established archives service. The practice recommended is based on that first developed by the National Archives and Records Service of the United States of America, which has since been adapted for use by non-governmental organisations, including businesses, and has been introduced in a modified form into other English speaking countries. However, the recommendations do not always coincide precisely with American practice, as they derive in part from the author's own experience in establishing archives and records management services, both in government and in commerce and industry. In particular, reference will be made to Canadian, Australian and British practice where it is relevant.

1.12 Differing administrative and archive traditions as well as lack of a uniform terminology and the fact that English records management texts are not readily available in other languages, may be one reason why these techniques are not better known internationally. They are, however, capable of universal application, regardless of language differences.

Notes

1. William Benedon, Records Management 1961, p.258. This definition does not include a data processing record created by a computer on magnetic tape or disk, which consists of two or more data fields in predetermined order, treated as a unit. A field is a specified part of a data processing records containing information of a particular kind; for example, a sales invoice created on a computer will consist of separate fields in which the name of the customer, his address, details of the goods sold to him, the quantity and the price will be recorded. Only when this 'record' is printed out so that it can be sent to the customer, will it become a record in the traditional sense. Otherwise the magnetic tape or disk containing the data must be regarded as the record in the sense that the word is used in this study.
2. International Council on Archives, Glossary of Archival Terms (unpublished draft)
3. Donald H. Bell, Records Management Program - Comprehensive Outline, International Records Management Council, Report No.3, 1982.
4. International Council on Archives, op.cit.
5. Morris Rieger, 'Modern Records retirement and appraisal practice', UJISLAA, vol.1, No.3, 1979, pp.200-209.
6. New South Wales Government Records Management Office, Records Scheduling and Disposal, 1976, p.3.

2. Authority and Control

2.1 A decision by an organisation to embark upon a programme of records surveys in order to develop records schedules and more efficient systems of records management carries with it important implications. The organisation must be prepared to employ specialist staff to carry out the surveys and, in the second place, it must be prepared to invest money in implementing the improvements in record management practices arising out of the surveys for the sake of future benefits. Where resources are limited, for example in developing countries, it may be necessary to expand the activities of an existing function, such as the National Archives, to include records management, but the first task will be to establish a nucleus of qualified and experienced staff, preferably organised as a records management unit, capable of:

2.1.1 Developing systems for the conduct of records surveys and schedules;

2.1.2 Training their own and agency staff to operate the systems;

2.1.3 Providing a consultative service on records management systems for agencies or departments, and

2.1.4. Providing such other services as may be required for the new systems.

2.2 The recruitment and training of the staff of the records management unit can present problems in countries where the required expertise is

scarce. The appointment of the head of the records management unit is the critical factor. If no suitably qualified candidate can be found locally, it is preferable to employ a consultant to establish the unit and to develop the survey, scheduling and other essential systems, rather than to employ an expert trained in another field who might not adapt readily to the new discipline. Once this key appointment has been made, subordinate staff can be recruited and trained within the unit or by secondment to specialised training courses abroad, if no suitable courses exist locally. If a consultant has been employed to set up the unit, a suitable candidate trained in this way can be groomed to take over the unit when the consultant's contract has been completed.

2.3 The problem of finding suitable training courses for records managers can be difficult. Archivists are, to an increasing degree, becoming involved in records management, and a considerable proportion of the syllabus of some archives management courses are now devoted to the subject. For example, the Programme of Studies for the Post-graduate Diploma in Archives Studies at the Regional Training Centre for Archivists in Accra, Ghana, devotes equal time (18.6%) to both records and archives management, including practical experience.(1) The archives diploma courses at the universities of Liverpool and London, England, likewise devote a considerable proportion of their syllabus to records management. In the United States, however, archivists and records managers are generally regarded as different professions with allied interests, with the result that separate courses of training usually exist for both professions.(2) The main difference is, that archivists tend to be preoccupied with the evaluation and preservation of records, whereas records managers are more concerned with the efficient management of

records in the office. It is essential that both these points of view should be reflected in the work of the records management unit.

2.4 The size of the records management unit will naturally depend on the size of the parent organisation and the speed at which the surveys and schedules are to be developed. For the purpose of this study it is assumed that the organisation is sufficiently large for its functions to be delegated to sub-divisions which are in this study designated "agencies". In an organisation of any size, a system of priorities will be necessary so that the surveys can be developed over a prescribed period, preferably beginning with key agencies which are concerned with policy and overall control of the organisation, such as the chief executive and finance. It should, however, always be possible to change priorities according to need, for example, when an unsurveyed agency becomes the subject of a major reorganisation.

2.5 All the members of the staff of the unit should be expert in the basic techniques of of surveying and scheduling. Beyond this, individuals should be encouraged to specialize. Ideally, sufficient expertise should be available within the unit to enable agencies to consult it on all aspects of records management. It should, therefore, include specialists in micrographics, reprography and computer applications, as well as filing systems and other aspects of the management of paper records.

2.6 In addition to the consultative function, the records management unit should also provide common services wherever needed. The most important of these are records centre facilities for the storage of semi-

current records, including film, magnetic tapes and disks. Provision for records centre accommodation should be included in the estimates at the time that the unit is established, as the full implementation of the records schedules will depend on the availability of low-cost, efficiently managed storage space for records. A second important common service is a central microfilming unit, but the development of such a unit will depend on the nature and extent of the needs of the parent organisation, which can only be determined during the course of the surveys. It must be emphasized that the advent of data processing has not rendered the records centre concept obsolete, any more than it has superseded the use of microforms, even though there has been much speculation of late about possible reductions in the amount of paper that will be used in future.

2.7 When the records management unit has been established, it is essential that its role should be properly defined by administrative regulation or, in the case of a government, by legislation, but the absence of such regulation or legislation should not deter the unit from developing a programme of work pending the issue of a formal document supporting its activities. Since its first task should be the records survey, it will, however, require sufficient authority to ensure that it has the right to approach all agencies in order to carry out its work. One essential requirement is that the destruction of records by departments should be restricted in accordance with parameters agreed with the records mangement unit. As the records to be surveyed and scheduled will be in the offices of the agencies who created or received them, their co-operation is essential for the development of the programme. Responsibility for implementation of the programme ought, therefore, to be vested in the head of the agency, acting on the advice and with the

management support of the head of the records management unit. Responsibility for the work of the survey and for approval of the schedules should, however, rest with the head of the records management unit. In carrying out the work, the records management unit will need to liaise with officers appointed by each agency to be responsible for the implementation of the records survey programme within it.

2.8 If the records management unit is part of the archives service final approval of records schedules may be delegated to the head of the records management unit by the chief archivist, who should have the last word on the selection of archival material. If, however, the records management unit is independent of the archives service, machinery must be created which will ensure that the schedules are submitted for final approval by the chief archivist, and that the staff of the archives service co-operates at all stages of the process of appraisal and review.

2.9 There has been much discussion recently about the proper place of the records management unit within an organisation. Much of this discussion relates to the interdisciplinary nature of records management, involving as it does computers, microform, archives and information management. In business it has found a place variously in the department of the company secretary or within finance or administration. In government it has found a place quite naturally within the archives service. However, in recent years, the increasing emphasis that has been placed on information management has highlighted the relationship with libraries, documentation centres and data processing departments. Developments in electronic data processing, which have revolutionised records management, have also revolutionised information management, which

has, hitherto, largely been confined to published material such as books, articles, technical reports and studies. As records are also a potent source of information, there has been some speculation as to whether records management is, in fact, only one facet of information management. There will always be a difference between the management of records, which accumulate naturally during the business activities of an organisation and have, therefore, a unique legal and evidential value, and the management of non-record material, which accumulates in libraries and documentation centres as a result of deliberate choice. This has led to a form of organisation which associates archives, records management, library documentation and data processing as equal partners in an information department. It may perhaps be premature to anticipate any widespread acceptance of this form of organisation, but whatever form is chosen, it is essential that good interdisciplinary relations should exist at all levels within the broad framework of information management. Above all, it is important to ensure that one discipline does not dominate the others, as this may lead to serious long term consequences. For example, the computer is a good servant, but a bad master, and the retention of medium and long term information to be derived from records may be seriously affected as a result of a failure to consult with the records management unit when a new information system is being planned.(3)

Notes

1. Regional Training Centre for Archivists - Accra, Project Findings and Recommendations,(UNDP) Unesco, Paris 1981, Appendix E.1.
2. For a list of records management courses available in the USA, see

'A Directory of Collegiate Schools Teaching Records Management', Records Management Quarterly, vol.15, no.1, January 1981.

3. William Benedon, 'Management in Information - An Interdisciplinary Approach', ibid., vol.12, no.4, October 1978.

3. Records Surveys - Preparation

3.1 It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of records surveys in the management of records throughout their life cycle. On such surveys depend, not only records schedules, which is the other main preoccupation of this study, but also the development of improved techniques for managing records. A records survey falls naturally into three stages:

3.1.1 Preparation, when agencies are notified that a survey is being initiated and a preliminary investigation of the records of the agency is carried out,

3.1.2 Inventory, when details of the records series held by each agency unit are obtained,

3.1.3 Appraisal, when the records series identified during the inventory stage are evaluated to determine appropriate retention periods for them.

3.2 For the purpose of the present study, it is assumed that records management is being introduced into an organisation for the first time, or that a specialist branch of an existing organisation is being established to carry out records surveys and to develop records schedules. In these circumstances the survey teams will be provided by the records management unit. In some countries, for example, Canada, Australia and the U.S.A., it is the practice to use departmental personnel for this work, but the legislative basis for records management has long been established in

those countries and is well developed. In the absence of such a situation, it is best to concentrate the main effort within the records management unit and to involve departmental staff only after they have become familiar with good records management practice. In the case of very large agencies, however, the creation of one or more teams, appointed and paid by the agency to survey their records and to compile schedules, may be justified and the head of the records management unit should be prepared to consider this possibility. The relationship of these teams with the records management unit is, however, of critical importance; they should be trained in the same procedures and systems and the head of the records management unit should be responsible for their work and for their recruitment.

3.3 As soon as possible after the establishment of the records management unit, an announcement should be circulated by the chief executive or the highest responsible official, in the form of a circular letter, directive or brochure, setting out the aims and objects of the records management programme. The amount of detail that should be included will depend on the stage of development already reached. Where an archives service exists it will have contacts with most agencies and it would clearly be sensible to build on these contacts. Where no such service exists, the emphasis should be placed primarily on cost savings through cost avoidance, the greater efficiency to be derived from improved records management (which should, in any case, be given a prominent place in the announcement), and the importance of selecting and preserving archives. The announcement should begin with a general statement of the principles of records management and should deal mainly with records retention and protection and the intention to develop and to implement

them through records surveys. The aspects of records protection which should be included are the establishment of low-cost, high-density records centres, the protection of records vital to the continuance of the organisation in case of emergency, and the selection and preservation of the organisation's archives. The announcement should also indicate the need for other related future developments, such as forms, reports and directives control, and correspondence and files management. The records management unit should indicate its ability to offer advice and assistance in establishing such programme elements, should the the surveys show that they are necessary.

3.4 When the announcement is ready for circulation, the first agency whose records are to be surveyed should be notified about the objectives and the procedures to be followed. This can best be done, if, in the first instance, the head of the records management unit can arrange a personal interview with the head of the agency to explain the broad general intentions of the survey and to invite his co-operation. The aim of the interview should be to persuade the agency head to put his authority behind the presentation of the proposals to the heads of the departments of his agency with a view to the development of a survey programme for each department. A copy of the announcement should be sent to the head of the agency in advance of the interview and the head of the records management unit should determine the number of copies that the agency head will require to circularise all his departmental heads. These should be forwarded as soon as possible after the interview, with a covering letter confirming the details of the interview and providing whatever additional information may be helpful. In the case of a very large agency, the agency head may decide not to deal with the matter

personally and he may delegate it to a member of his staff. The agency head should, however, be kept informed of the progress of the survey in such terms and with sufficient authority to ensure that he takes the matter seriously.

3.5 As soon as arrangements have been made with the agency head to carry out a survey, he should be asked to circulate a memorandum to his departmental heads informing them of the arrangements, which should be provided by the head of the records management unit. A timetable of visits should be arranged in general terms at the same time. At this stage the head of the records management unit should decide the number of teams that will be required to carry out the survey. If possible, each team should consist of an analyst who identifies records series and an assistant who records the details and ensures that the results are properly tabulated. The head of the unit must also ensure that a responsible officer or manager is nominated in each department to assist his team to locate all the records to be surveyed and to answer any questions about their nature and significance.

3.6 When an agency has agreed that a survey may be undertaken, it is advisable to identify the extent of the task by means of a preliminary investigation designed to estimate the volume of records held by each department, their location and the equipment and floor space occupied, in order to plan the preparation of the inventory. (Form 1) The information obtained is used to provide the agency with a quantitative analysis of the task, an estimate of the time necessary to compile the inventory and the expected benefits of the survey, for example cost avoidance in the recovery of equipment and floor space. It is essential that the

RECORDS SURVEY 19 FINANCE OFFICE

Department	Section		Date
ACCOUNTS	PAYROLL		20-12-83
Contact	**Location**	**Room**	**Tel:**
MR L PAYMASTER	HEAD OFFICE	10	3729

Equip.	Quantity	Vol. (cu.ft.)
F4	IIII	32
L6	II	32
S	I	4
SS6	IIII	64
MF	III	3

Remarks TOTAL 135

F4 = 4 drawer filing cabinets
L6 = Lateral filing units - 6 racks high
S = Safe.
SS6 = Steel shelving - 6 shelves high.
MF = Microfiche cabinets

Form 1 Sheet No. 1

preliminary investigation should be carried out by a qualified team headed by a records analyst and not by the staff of the agency on the basis of a questionnaire, firstly because questionnaire answers are notoriously unreliable, unless they are recorded by trained investigators, and secondly because, in carrying out the preliminary investigation, the team will gather valuable information, which will help them to expedite work on the inventory. A questionnaire for the guidance of the unit team can, however, be of great value in ensuring that all the information essential for the preparation of the inventory is gathered. (Form 2)

3.7 The design of forms to be used for records surveys and schedules will vary according to the particular systems and procedures adopted by the records management unit, which will, in turn, depend on the nature of the relationships established between the unit and the agencies whom it serves. The greater the powers given to the unit, the more uniform the procedures and, consequently, the forms will be. In common with the forms used in all works on records management, those used to illustrate this study are based on the pioneer work of the late Emmett J. Leahy and Christopher A. Cameron in the U.S.A., published in 1965 in Modern Records Management . This work has to some extent been superseded by other works, such as William Benedon's Records Management and the series of guides to records management practice published by many organisations for use in their agencies.

RECORDS SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Date:

Office:

Department: **Section:**

Location: **Contact:**

Telephone No.:

1. What are the functions of this Department/Section?

2. What are the main series of records held?

3. (a) Is there a uniform system of filing?

   (b) Are there established filing procedures?

4. (a) Is microfilm used?

   (b) For aperture cards?

   (c) For information retrieval?

   (d) For records to be retained for less than 10 years?

5. (a) Is filing equipment efficiently used?

   (b) Who is responsible for controlling the purchase of equipment?

Form 2

6. (a) Are Forms numbered?

   (b) Who is responsible for designing and printing them?

7. (a) Is there a standard procedure for records retention?

   (b) Who sets retention periods?

   (c) Are there retention Schedules?

8. (a) Is there off-floor storage for non-current records?

   (b) Where is it located?

   (c) Is it shared?

   (d) Who looks after it?

   (e) Are there procedures for transfer?

   (f) Can information be retrieved efficiently?

   (g) Is space efficiently utilised?

   (h) Are records periodically destroyed?

   (i) Who destroys them?

   (j) By what means are they destroyed? Is the waste sold?

9. What measures are taken to protect vital records, e.g. against fire and flood?

10. What other information about record keeping should be noted?

4. Records Surveys - the Inventory

4.1 The core of a records survey is an inventory of the records series in the custody of each department of the agency. A records inventory should be distinguished from an archival inventory, which may be defined as "a finding aid listing and describing in varying degrees of detail the contents of one or more archive groups, usually including a brief history of the organisation and functions of the originating agency, institution or organisation and, if appropriate, indexes".(1) A records inventory is a complete listing of the records of an agency, by series or category, with sufficient supporting information to enable a proper appraisal and evaluation to be made of file formation and activity.(2). A records series may be defined as a body of records arranged in a particular order (numerical, chronological, or alphabetical), or having the same physical form (maps, microfilm), or arising from a specific activity or purpose, and filed and used as a unit.(3)

4.2 The inventory should be compiled by the same team or teams that carried out the preliminary investigation, because they should have established a good working relationship with the staff of the department and should be familiar with agency operations. An understanding of these operations, derived from discussions with the staff and from research into the agency's organisation, its records and their classification, are the foundation of good inventory work and every effort should be made to obtain such information, if possible, in advance of the preliminary investigation. The agency should therefore be asked at an early stage for copies of any histories, organisational charts and reports, standing orders, operating directives and files classification systems that may be

available. Information about existing records retention practices, however informal, is also essential. The inventory is carried out systematically to ensure that each office and storage area is covered.

4.3 Each inventory form should be confined to one series of records, but more than one form may be required for a series, depending on the number of locations in which the records are stored. For convenience, the form should not exceed metric size A4.(Form 3) It should specify the following information:

4.3.1 Agency The names of the agency, and the department should appear on the form, as well as the name, address and telephone number of the department or section where the records are actually located. In very large agencies, it may be impossible to include full details of the agency hierarchy without overloading the form. In such cases, some levels can be omitted, provided that an accurate agency organisation chart is available, specifying the place of the department within it.

4.3.2 Responsible Officer The name, telephone and extension numbers of the person responsible for the records.

4.3.3 Date of Inventory The dates on which the series is inventoried.

4.3.14 Records Series Title and Description The title and description allocated to the records series is the most important item on the inventory. The essential elements are discussed later

in this study.

4.3.5 Inclusive Dates The dates of the earliest and latest records in the series must be included. Gaps of any length in the series should be noted.

4.3.6 Arrangement The arrangement of the series, for example alphabetical, numerical or classified order, together with details of any finding aids, such as indexes or classification systems.

4.3.7 Type and Physical Description The main types of records forming the series should be specified, e.g. correspondence, memoranda, reports etc., as also should their physical description, e.g. book, photograph, microfilm, map, drawing, chart, magnetic tape or disk, etc..

4.3.8 Equipment The nature of the storage equipment used, e.g. 4-drawer filing cabinet, index card cabinet, steel shelving, etc..

4.3.9 Volume The quantity of records in the series should be calculated according to a standard formula, based on document size. For example, the average 4-drawer filing cabinet for A4 size documents will hold .23 cubic meters, each drawer of which will hold .06 cubic meters.

4.3.10 Location The locations in which records belonging to the series are to be found, including the room number and the position of each item of filing equipment within it must be specified.

RECORDS INVENTORY WORK SHEETS

RECORDS INVENTORY WORK SHEET

YEARS	RANGE	AREA	LOCATION	EQUIPMENT	CU.FT.	ACTION

DESCRIPTION

OFF. C.F.

STOR. C.F.

VAULT C.F.

RECORDS TITLE

ORGANIZATION

RECORDS INVENTORY WORK SHEET

YEARS	RANGE	AREA	LOCATION	EQUIPMENT	CU.FT.	ACTION

DESCRIPTION

OFF. C.F.

STOR. C.F.

VAULT C.F.

RECORDS TITLE

ORGANIZATION

Form 3

Identification can be facilitated by the use of floor plans showing the position of each piece of filing equipment within each room and by assigning a letter or number to each piece of equipment, starting at the left hand side of the room. Each drawer or shelf should be numbered from bottom to top, as filing units will vary in height.

4.3.11 Frequency of reference How many times records were referred to during the month prior to the date of the inventory.

4.3.12 Annual rate of accumulation The volume of records created or received during the previous year.

4.3.13 Duplicates and related records The existence of duplicates within the agency or in other agencies should be noted, together with any variations in the data recorded in them. Related records containing the same or substantially similar information should also be noted. In principle, the series containing the maximum amount of information in the most convenient form should be earmarked as the 'record copy' for retention for the optimum period.

4.3.14 Function of records The purposes for which the records were accumulated and used are important, for example, to meet statutory, legal or special administrative requirements. Any restrictions on access, for example as a result of security classification, should be recorded.

4.3.15 Disposal Action taken within the department to retain or destroy the records.(4)

4.4 Once the inventory has been started, it is important to ensure that no records should be destroyed or removed to another location without the knowledge of the team. Instructions to this effect should be circulated before the work starts. By the same token, the survey team must ensure that the survey, including appraisal and scheduling, is completed without undue delay.

4.5 The quality of the inventory will depend on the accuracy with which records series are defined and titles are allocated. It is essential that the series titles assigned by the creating department are recorded during the survey, but these titles are not necessarily those that should be used for sorting and filing the forms prior to appraisal and incorporation into the records retention schedule. The need for standardisation arises out of the use of synonyms to describe the same series of records in different departments within the same agency. For example, a register in one department may be called a list in another and an invoice may be called a bill. However, where standardisation is necessary, the standard version should appear on the form before the departmental version, which should be included within brackets. It is also important that the words in a standard series title should be arranged in a regular order, generally beginning with the title of the record. For example, the word 'order' should appear before administrative origin (Public Services Board), function (application for grant), subject matter and frequency (monthly, quarterly, annual).

4.6 Some series of records will require special consideration, such as general correspondence, which consists of individual subject files, or series of outsize documents such as maps, plans and engineering drawings. It is impracticable in most cases to list the title of each individual folder or other file unit separately on individual inventory forms. Instead, a general description of the series must be provided, sufficient to enable an appraisal and evaluation of the series to be made. Where registers or indexes to the files or drawings exist, it should be possible both to provide a description which will make it possible to treat all the items in the series as either of only routine and therefore of short term value, or as of considerable and therefore of long term or permanent value. In some cases, however, it may be impossible to make such a decision, either because the series is too large and too miscellaneous, or because of the lack of data, such as information from registers and indexes, on which to make a satisfactory decision. In such cases, the individual records must be subjected to a file by file review, the nature of which is dealt with in the next chapter.

4.7 A special problem can also be presented by records in microform or on magnetic tapes or disks. Here a description of the individual data is even less possible as its sheer volume is daunting. In such cases the series must be assessed, at least in part, on the basis of the systems analysis and the program details drawn up before it was introduced. The same problem often arises in relation to series of photographic records and sound or video recordings. Once again the inventory description must be derived from a general assessment of the nature of the data records, rather than on the basis of the data themselves. Another very important factor that must be taken into account at the inventory stage is the

nature and age of the equipment (microfilm reader, computer, projector), required to read the records, as steps will have to be taken to ensure that the information remains accessible for as long as it may be needed, bearing in mind the rapid rate at which such equipment becomes obsolete.

4.8 The order in which records should be inventoried will depend on the arrangements made with the department. There are advantages in starting with non-current in storage areas, as they can be listed with the minimum possible disturbance to the work of the staff and should result in the early clearance of records by destruction or transfer to a records centre or archival repository. Moreover, close study of the older records will give the survey team an insight into the work of the agency and the structure of its record keeping practices, which will stand them in good stead, when they are analysing the current records in the offices. Agency staff are usually impressed by a modest display of knowledge of their activities, derived from a study of their history and their older records, and are always inclined to co-operate more readily with someone who shows an understanding and an appreciation of their work.

4.9 It is also essential to monitor the progress of the inventory to ensure that no items are overlooked. This can best be done by means of a simple form which lists the departments, the date on which the inventory has been completed and the quantity of records surveyed. The same form can be used to record the dates on which later stages in the process of surveying and scheduling are completed. These include the appraisal of the records series, the authorisation of retention periods for them by the head of the department and any other officials who may be concerned, including the head of the archives. Finally, it should record the date

at which the approved records schedule is issued for implementation by the agency. (Form 4)

4.10 The main purpose of the inventory is a comprehensive and systematic appraisal of records series and the preparation of records retention authorisations on the basis of which records schedules can be issued for implementation by agency units, but the inventory should also be used to identify records management problems and lead to the introduction of alternative systems of record keeping. For example, a very large series of records to which frequent reference is required over a long period, such as pensions files, may well be better reduced to jacketed microfilm, which will save valuable office accommodation. Key information can also be held 'on line' on a computer, where retrieval can be virtually instantaneous.

4.11 On the basis of the data collected during the survey, the records management unit should prepare a comprehensive inventory of the space and equipment used by the agency for records, which will enable the agency to determine direct savings and cost avoidance through the more effective use of their resources. These inventories should be reviewed and updated annually for the best results.

4.12 Such applications of the inventory are, however, beyond the scope of this study, which is confined to the use of the information acquired in the development of records schedules. For this purpose, inventory forms for each department should be sorted into alphabetical order of series title, or by classification where the unit has a detailed file classification system. The records are then subjected to a detailed appraisal.

SURVEY PROGRESS WORKSHEET

DEPARTMENT	NO.	INVEN.	VOL.	REQUIRED	CONTACTS		CLEARANCES DEPT.	CLEARANCES BRANCH	CLEARANCES COMM	SCHED NO.	DEPT. REV.	SCHED. ISSUED
FINANCE												
GENERAL	201	3/9/76-3/10/76	351 cf (1200)	4/6/76	S. GREEN	X2766	4/14/76	4/15/76	4/21/76	F-1	4/29/76	5-1-76
PAYMASTER	205	3/10/76-3/10/76	150 c.f. (326)	4/6/76	J. WILLIAMS	X1355	5/14/76	5/16/76	5/21/76	F-2	4/29/76	5-1-76
DATA PROCESSING	206	3/10/76-3/10/76	6 REC.	4/6/76	T. SMITH	X7070	5/14/76	5/15/76	5/21/76	F-3	4/29/76	5-1-76
MATERIEL	705	3/17/76-3/18/76	360 c.f.	4/9/76	H. ROGERS	X2224	4/16/76	4/20/76	4/23/76	M-1	4/27/76	5-1-76
ENGINEERING	812	3/19/76-3/23/76	688 c.f. 2000	4/9/76	P. SULLIVAN	X4040	4/20/76	4/20/76	4/23/76	E-1	4/27/76	5-1-76

WORK SHEET

Form 4

4.13 For ease of sorting and later amendment, the data derived from the inventory forms may be keyed into a data management program on a micro-computer. This has the advantage that, provided each series is allocated a unique computer reference, the information can be entered in random order and can be sorted by the computer later, in any order that may be desirable for the preparation of draft records schedules. Later, when comments have been received from the authorising officers, the draft schedules can be updated and the final versions printed for circulation. An example of the use of a micro-computer for the compilation of records schedules is included in the Appendix, together with samples of the documentation. The limited memory available on a microcomputer can however affect its ability to sort large data bases efficiently. In such cases it would be necessary to have recourse to a main frame computer.

Notes

1. ICA, Glosssary of Archival Terms (unpublished draft)

2. Benedon, Records Management, p.13.

3. New South Wales, Records Scheduling and Disposal, p.4.

4. John W. Gross, 'Inventorying and Scheduling of Records', RMQ April 1973; Artel Ricks, Republic of the Phillippines, Ramp Pilot Project for the establishment of a Regional Archives and Records Centre, Unesco, Paris, 1981.

5. Records Surveys - Appraisal

5.1 'Appraisal' may be defined as "a basic archival function of determining the eventual disposal of records based upon their current and future administrative, fiscal and legal uses and their evidential, informational and research values. Sometimes referred to as evaluation or selective retention".(1) Appraisal in the sense of the assessment of the value of records to an agency or to the government or organisation as a whole, is a continuous process throughout the survey and, in particular, during the compilation of the inventory, in that the analyst should observe and note information bearing on the actual and potential use and significance of each records series. Final appraisal should not, however, be undertaken until the inventory of the records of an agency has been completed, because the relative value of any series will depend in part on its relationship with other series. In fact appraisal is the joint responsibility of the records management unit, the agency and the archives service. It takes place at two levels. At the first level, a provisional evaluation of each series and a recommended retention period must be submitted with the inventory details to the agency for consideration. The agency staff are then required to determine how long they will need to retain each series for business purposes. At the second level, the archives service must determine which of the records series have archival value and thus should subject to permanent preservation.

5.2 At the first level, the objective is to determine the administrative, legal, fiscal, operational and informational value and use of each record series to determine the length of time that these values and uses help to justify the cost of retaining them. Much of the information upon

which decisions will be made will have been obtained during the course of the survey and will be recorded on the inventory forms, but questions will inevitably arise which must be discussed with the agency and the archival service, before disposal decisions can be finally agreed. The questions appropriate to the first level of appraisal are; how often are the records referred to and by whom? At what time does the period of high reference end? Is there any legal or administrative requirement that the records should be retained? Are the records duplicated? If so, which is the 'record' copy which should be retained for the longest period? Is the information contained in these records to be found in whole or in part in other records series or reports, printed or unprinted? How rapidly is the series growing and is there adequate storage space for it in the agency unit? (2) Depending on the answers to these questions, retention periods will be agreed between the records management unit and the agency which will be related to their value for the conduct of the business of the latter.

5.3 The administrative value of records derives from their importance in determining the policy and procedures necessary to carry on the activities of the agency or organisation. Records of administrative value will include statutes and executive orders, reports and minutes of boards and committees, budgets and budget estimates, organisational reports and charts, procedural manuals, directives, rules and regulations, circulars, statistics, annual and other periodic and special reports. They will also include 'housekeeping' or 'facilitative' records such as personnel files, files relating to the purchase and maintenance of property, equipment and supplies. The legal value of records derives from their importance in defining the rights and obligations of the

organisation, its staff and of the individuals and organisations with which it has dealings. Such records will include contracts, title deeds, leases, agreements and patents. The fiscal value of records derives from their importance in showing how money is obtained, allotted, controlled, expended and accounted for. Records with fiscal value will include ledgers, cash books, invoices, inventories, salary and superannuation records. The operational, 'functional' or 'substantive' value of records derives from their importance in implementing the functions of the agency unit on a day-to-day basis. Records falling into this category will depend on the nature of the agency's business, but they will certainly include correspondence, memoranda and forms, usually organized into case or subject files, relating to individual transactions of many kinds, scientific and technological files, publications and, in the case of business organisations, production and sales records and publicity material. The informational value of records is independent of their form or function. It is derived from their content that is to say, the information that they contain about persons, places and subjects.(3)

5.4 At the first level of appraisal, values must be judged in terms of the use of the records in the conduct and documentation of the business activities of the agency. The value of the records and the information that they contain cannot and should not be judged at this level by any other criterion, for example, their value for historical or other kinds of research. At the second level, when their archival value must be decided and, consequently, the need to preserve them as archives, records must be appraised by the archives service in terms of their evidential, informational and historical value. The evidential value of records depends on the evidence that they contain about the origin, structure,

functions, procedures and significant transactions of the body that produced them, whilst the informational value of records depends on the information that they contain on the organisations, problems, conditions, as well as the persons, places and subjects referred to in the records.(4) Thus records of evidential value are likely to be found amongst those with the greatest administration, legal, fiscal, and operational values, which have been assigned the longest retention periods at the first level of appraisal. Records of long term informational value are likely to be selected from those with the highest informational values identified at the same time.

5.5 Only records of the greatest evidential and informational value can be preserved permanently, because of the cost of preservation, but steps must be taken to ensure that potential archival material is not destroyed in pursuit of an arbitrary standard which prescribes the maximum percentage of a total body of records that should be preserved. For example, a figure of one per cent was suggested by the British Public Record Office in a Guide for Departmental Record Officers in 1958, but the Wilson Committee on Modern Public Records stated in their Report that "generalised figures such as this 1 per cent are dangerous and irrelevant to the process of selection for preservation in any one department", and that "even in some high policy departments, staff felt that they were failing in their job if they did not approach this figure by disposing of over 90 per cent of the paper coming to them for review".(5) It is essential, therefore, that the archives service should appraise all records series before any decision about ultimate disposal has been taken and no that records should be destroyed without its express authority. It must, however, be accepted, that it may not generally be possible to

preserve in its entirety a bulky series of records such as case papers, however important the informational value of the individual files may be. This is particularly true of fiscal and operational series of records. It may therefore be necessary to employ one or more methods of sampling to ensure that a representative example of a records series, common to more than one regional or geographical area, or of the records within such a series are preserved.(6)

5.6 The existence of these two levels or stages of appraisal involving the records management unit, the agency and the archives service raises the question as to how and when they should be carried out. It is obvious that the first stage of appraisal by the records management unit and the agency must be undertaken as soon as the inventory is complete, otherwise it will be impossible to progress to the next stage of issuing mandatory records schedules. The chief problem is the point at which the archives service should exercise its right of appraisal. The British Government, which has adopted the reviewing system recommended by the Grigg Report, does not require the Public Record Office to intervene at the first level of appraisal, or first review, which is carried out by the departments on all records that have been closed for a maximum of five years, in order to eliminate purely ephemeral records that are no longer required for current business. The Inspecting Officers of the Public Record Office are only required to ensure that the first review is carried out and to undertake test checks on the quantity of records retained at this level. It is only the second level of appraisal or review which is carried out by the Public Record Office in conjunction with the department on those records that have survived the first review. Under this system, the second review should take place within twenty-five years of the

closure of the records. It should however be observed that these reviews are specifically designed for the individual appraisal of files that have accumulated in government registries and not of records series included in records schedules, but the system does require the development of Disposal Lists which should include "details of unregistered papers (such as accounting records, attendance books, forms etc.) as well as registered papers of a standard type which do not vary from year to year, and all other kinds of records which can be destroyed without further scrutiny after agreed retention periods". The term 'Disposal List' in Great Britain is a type of records schedule under which about two thirds of the records created within government are dealt with, but hitherto the only appraisal requirement by the Public Record Office has been that their Inspecting Officer should reach agreement with the Departmental Records Officer on all items included in the lists, which should be scrutinised each year to ensure that they are brought up to date.(7)

5.7 The effectiveness of the first review has been criticised by the Wilson Committee on the grounds that "the Inspecting Officers do not, in the main, oversee (them) - largely for lack of time. We believe it essential that PRO should participate in first reviews, for this is the area where departments are least clear about their responsibilities and where inadequate decisions can lead to major losses - not only for posterity but for purposes of current administration". The Committee also recommended that "departments which do not have disposal lists should survey their records in order to identify those of standard types which do not vary from year to year, whether registered or unregistered, including machine readable records, for which standard instructions could be issued" and that "the PRO should ensure that uniform retention periods for

material common to several departments are settled with the appropriate advice". Although the Goverment response to the Report of the Wilson Committee did not accept the Committee's findings, the evidence on spot checks carried out in a number of departments, submitted to the Committee of the House of Commons reviewing the Wilson Report, indicated that first review procedures were not entirely satisfactory and the new Manual of Records Administration issued by the Public Record Office, provides for more input by Inspecting Officers in the compilation of disposal lists.(8)

5.8 The findings of the Wilson Comittee therefore emphasize the importance of the involvement of the archives service in the first level of appraisal and in the development of records schedules. This is not to say that final appraisal by the archives service can be completed in one operation, but that the value of a records survey based on a detailed inventory is that filing systems can usually be broken down into many series for inclusion in a records schedule for appraisal, which will greatly reduce the volume of records that must be subjected to a file by file appraisal, either at the first or second level.

5.9 A further pressing reason for the participation of the archives service at the first stage of appraisal is the rapid development of machine readable records, an increasing number of which are now being held on-line. Early appraisal decisions are required to ensure that, where the information must be permanently retained on magnetic tape or disk, appropriate measures are taken to ensure their preservation and legibility after their transfer to archives. Legibility depends on the existence of hardware compatible with the tapes and disks, as well as on their physical state, which will depend on the conditions under which the tapes and disks

are stored. Where information of permanent value is held predominantly on-line and is of a type that would need to be depersonalised after a period under data protection legislation, it is essential that the program should include facilities for periodic statistical or other reports, compatible with to the needs of the archives service, which indicates the necessity for contacts with the data processing department at the program planning stage to ensure the conversion of semi-current as well as current data when any change in an operating system is undertaken, because retrospective conversion of semi-current data is very much more expensive. The same provisos also apply to video tape, microfilm and cinematograph film, where special arrangements need to be made at an early stage for the storage and preservation of the materials and, if necessary, of the reading equipment.

5.10 If the records management unit is part of the archives service, there should be no difficulty in arranging for appraisal at both stages either through the unit itself, or by submitting the records schedules for scrutiny by the archives staff. Where the records management unit is not so placed, it may be necessary to establish an appraisal panel, consisting of members of the staffs of the records management unit, the agency and the archives service. The appraisal panel should be able to identify records series of potential archival importance which should be transferred to the archives when they can be released by the agency, i.e. when they become non-current. The date of transfer should also be specified. If there is a general access rule, such as the 30-year rule in Great Britain, archival series will normally be transferred at a stated period after the latest date in the record, e.g. 25 years. In such cases only exceptions should be recorded in the schedule, i.e where the records

must be retained for reference by the agency for more than the stated period. Decisions should also be taken at this stage on records series which must be deferred for future appraisal by the archives on a file-by-file basis. This can best be done by prescribing a second appraisal after a specified lapse of time such as seven, ten, fifteen or twenty years after the closing date of the record. It is better to select one standard interval for the second appraisal to which rare exceptions can be made, rather than to designate several, which will make it difficult for the agency unit to monitor the material coming up for review at any given time.

5.11 The types of record for which appraisal may be deferred are mainly subject files, particularly those which are security classified, and series subject to statistical or other sampling processes. Security classified files should always be inventoried and included in the records schedule, but they may have to be downgraded or declassified before appraisal. Details of all records series deferred for appraisal at a second review should be included in the schedule, together with declassification dates agreed with the agency unit and with other agencies whose consent may be required. It is, however, important to ensure that the volume of classified records deferred for review should be kept to a minimum. No records with a classification below 'secret' should be deferred, since 'confidential' or 'personal' records should always be scheduled under normal procedures. It is also of the utmost importance that staff at the higher levels of the records management unit and the archives service should be cleared for access to semi-current classified records, to ensure the records survey is truly comprehensive.

5.12 To summarise, the principle data required for appraisal of a records series are as follows:

5.12.1 an assessment of the information contained in the records;

5.12.2 the statutory, legal and administrative basis of the series;

5.12.3 the purposes for which the series is used by the originating office;

5.12.4 the frequency of reference to the records by the originating office;

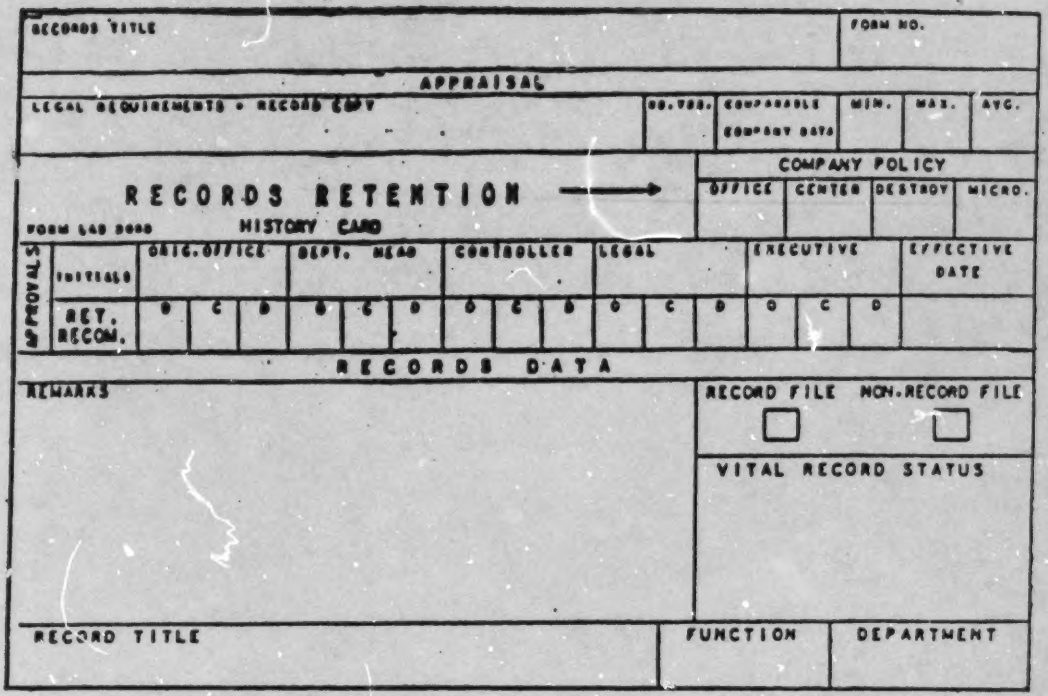
5.12.5 the rate at which the records accumulate;

5.12.6 restrictions on access and use of the series imposed by the originating office, for administrative, legal, security or other reasons;

5.12.7 the location of duplicate series of records;

5.12.8 details of other records series, printed or unprinted containing the same or similar information.

5.13 This information should be recorded at the time that it is gathered. This is usually done on an Appraisal Form (Form 5), but it can also be recorded on a combined Inventory and Appraisal Form (Form 6).



RECORDS TITLE | FORM NO.

APPRAISAL

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS • RECORD COPY | OR. VOL. | COMPARABLE COMPANY DATA | MIN. | MAX. | AVG.

RECORDS RETENTION → | COMPANY POLICY: OFFICE | CENTER | DESTROY | MICRO.

FORM LAD 3000 HISTORY CARD

APPROVALS	INITIALS	ORIG. OFFICE	DEPT. HEAD	CONTROLLER	LEGAL	EXECUTIVE	EFFECTIVE DATE
	RET. RECOM.	B C D	B C D	B C D	B C D	B C D	

RECORDS DATA

REMARKS | RECORD FILE ☐ NON-RECORD FILE ☐ | VITAL RECORD STATUS

RECORD TITLE | FUNCTION | DEPARTMENT

Form 5

RMAO Form No.1
Rev. 1980

RECORDS SURVEY AND SCHEDULING

1. Agency	2. Address and Phone
3. Organizational Unit	4. Person In-Charge of File

5. Records Series Title & Description

6. Duplication

7. Period covered	8. Location	9. Volume (Cu. M.)
10. Annual rate of accumulation	11. Finding Aids	

12. Type of Equipment	13. Filing System	14. Frequency of Referen
☐ 4-drawer filing cabinet	☐ Alphabetical	☐ Daily
☐ Storage	☐ Chronological	☐ Once a month
☐ Open Shelf	☐ Numerical	☐ As the need arises
☐ Others (Specify)	☐ Others (Specify)	☐ Others (Specify)

15. Nature of Use by Agency

16. Present Disposition Practices

17. Current and Anticipated Value and Use

Administrative	☐	Archival	☐
Fiscal (Financial)	☐	Legal	☐
Others	☐		

18. Recommended Retention Period

_____ Years in office file _____ Years in record centre

then ☐ Destroy ☐ Transfer to Archives

19. Approval of representative of National Archives _____

20. Prepared & Recommended by: 21 Position 22. Date

23. Remarks

Form 6

Care should, however, be taken to ensure that the form is not overloaded with information, which may make it difficult for the analyst to use.

Notes

1. ICA, Glossary of Archival Terms (unpublished draft)

2. Public Archives of Canada, Records Scheduling and Disposal, Records Management Series, Ottawa, 1980.

3 Ibid., pp.21-25.

4. T.R. Schellenberg, Modern Archives, first published 1956, Midway reprint, Chicago, 1978, p.139

5. Wilson Report, p.35

6. Felix Hull, The use of sampling Techniques in the Retention of Records, Unesco, Paris, 1981.

7. Public Record Office, Guide for Departmental Record Officers, Third Edition, London, 1971, p.6; which has been superceded by the Manual of Records Administration , 1983.

8. Wilson Report , pp.40,42; Modern Public Records , HMSO, 1983 (Cmnd 8531), p.3; House of Commons, Education, Science and Arts

Committee, Public Records, Minutes of Evidence , HMSO, 1983, pp.48 -53; Manual , Section 3.2.

6. Records Retention Authorisation

6.1 Each records series is given a preliminary appraisal by the analyst responsible for surveying the records of a department or section of an agency unit, in the context of the other records series created and maintained by the same department or section. On completion of the inventory, it is the task of the analyst to put forward specific recommendations for the retention of each series for approval by the heads of the records management unit, the agency and the archives service.

6.2 These retention recommendations should specify:

6.2.1 the period that records in the series are current and must, therefore, remain in the originating office for immediate reference. This is usually indicated by means of symbols, consisting of a letter representing the period during which documents may be added to a record in the series, (e.g.'C' represents a series to which documents may be added during the Current (fiscal) year; 'T' represents a series of files to which papers may be added, until the the subject or case with which the file is concerned has been Terminated), followed by a plus sign and the number of months or years that the records must remain in the originating office, e.g. 'C+1' signifies that a series containing records which refer only to transactions in respect of a fiscal year, such as invoices, should remain in the office for reference purposes for no more than one year after the end of the fiscal year to which they refer. Generally, records in a series become 'semi-

current', when the reference level in the originating office drops below two references per month, per file drawer (.06 cubic meters), at which point they should be transferred to high-density, low-cost storage in a records centre, to ensure the optimum use of prime office accommodation;

6.2.2 the length of time that semi-current records in a series should remain in the records centre for further reference. This is indicated by a figure representing the number of years that records in a series must be retained in the centre before disposal;

6.2.3 the ultimate disposal of the records by destruction or transfer to the archives repository, when they become non-current; that is to say, when the frequency of reference by the originating office no longer justifies their retention in accommodation earmarked for semi-current records. This is normally represented by a symbol, such as 'D' for Destruction and 'A' for transfer to Archives.

6.3 The recommendations must also specify:

6.3.1 Records series which must be retained for long periods, because the information that they contain is of vital importance to the agency or to its employees; for example, fiscal and legal documents, which are essential to the re-establishment of an agency and the legal rights of its employees in the event of a disaster, such as a fire or flood. The organisation of a full disaster planning programme for vital records is beyond the scope of this

study, but care should always be taken to identify such records during the course of a records survey;

6.3.2 Records series, such as case files, too bulky to justify the retention of each individual file, which must be sampled to preserve a selection, representative of the whole. The method of sampling recommended must also be specified;

6.3.3 Duplicate records series existing in the same or other departments, indicating which must be retained as the 'record' series for the longest period;

6.3.4 Records series retained in the originating office for long term reference, such as personnel files, which may be converted from one medium to another, e.g. from paper to microfilm, to improve the efficiency of retrieval and to save office space;

6.3.5 Records series subject to restrictions on access, e.g. as a result of a classification such as 'secret', which must be taken into account in recommending a period of retention, including the point at which the series should be downgraded.

6.4 These recommendations, together with sufficient information to justify them, should be embodied in a Records Retention Authorisation (Form 7), which should be submitted for approval to the head of the records management unit, who will, in turn, submit them for approval to the heads of the agency, the department and the archives service.

6.5 Where appropriate, the approval of other agencies, such as legal, financial and administration may also have to be obtained. Wherever possible this should be done through officers nominated by the agencies concerned, but it may prove necessary to establish an agency records retention committee, where representatives of the administration, legal and financial agencies sit with representatives of the agency concerned, the records management unit and the archives service, to determine disputed retention periods.

6.6. The head of the records management unit should be responsible for co-ordinating all the procedures for the authorisation of retention periods and should incorporate amendments to the original recommendations in a version of the Records Retention Authority Form for approval by the agency. Space for the insertion of the signatures of the department, the agency unit head and the head of the records management unit should be provided on the form. When the necessary approvals have been obtained, the following action should be taken:

6.6.1 Records that are already time-expired should be destroyed by the agency under the supervision of the records management unit;

6.6.2 Semi-current records held in office accommodation should be transferred by agency staff to low-cost storage in a records centre in accordance with the procedures laid down by the records management unit. Records centre accommodation, under the control of the records management unit, should already have been provided as part of the records management programme;

6.6.3 Records identified as archives should be transferred to the archival repository by agency staff, with the advice and assistance of the archives service;

6.6.4 Continuing records series should be incorporated in a Records Schedule issued by and on the authority of the records management unit, with the approval of the archives service.

Notes

1. Bethlehem Steel Corporation, Records Retention Program Procedure Manual, August 1972

RECORDS RETENTION AUTHORIZATION

SHEET NO. 1

DATE

OPERATION: xxxx Plant

DEPARTMENT/DIVISION: Metallurgical

SECTION: General

UNIT

Item No.	NAME OF RECORD	Report No.	Form No.	RETAIN O	RETAIN C	Destroy	Originating Approval	Remarks*
1	Accident Report		2533	~~10~~		~~10~~	JS	
	(1969-72) 1.5			5		5	JS.	SAFETY
2	Attendance Record		17611	1		1	JS	
	(-72) 5.4							✓
3	Blueprints And Drawings			ACT		IN-ACT	JS	ORIGINAL ON FILE IN ENGINEERING DEPT.
	(-72) 10.2							
RC 1	Claim File Including: Metallurgical Report Of Visit To Customer		2510	2	3	5	JS	✓
	Inter-Plant Claim Report		2359					
	Report Of Analysis-Chemical Lab		24253					
	Claim		27121					
	(1967-71) 16.6							
4	Claims Summary-Register Including: Monthly Reclamations			3		3	JS	REQUEST LEGAL DETERMINATION
	(1950-72) 2.1							
5	Daily Report Of Analysis Of Iron And Slag Including:		15880	10		10	JS	
	Report Of Analysis		24253					✓
	Daily Iron Analysis		38732					
	(1960-71) 10.5							
6	Gas, Coal and Coke Yearly Average			5		5	JS	
	(1940-71) 4.3							✓
7	Metallographic Laboratory Report Including: Photographs		2445	ACT		IN-ACT + 10	JS	✓
	(1970-71) .6							

DEPARTMENT/DIVISION HEAD'S SIGNATURE: Dave Creed

MANAGER'S SIGNATURE: M. P. Reed

EXECUTIVE'S SIGNATURE: J. C. Wardall

* Department of Record – Request for Legal Determination – Restricted Reference on Records Center – Etc.

Form 7

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7. Records Schedules

7.1 It is the responsibility of the head of the records management unit to issue records schedules as soon as the retention periods incorporated in the relevant Records Retention Authorisations have been formally approved by the agencies concerned. They are of two types, general, which cover records common to several or all agencies, e.g. financial documentation, and agency, which are tailor-made for the records of one agency.

7.2 General Schedules are usually based upon inventories of several offices, performing substantially the same work, but not always using the same terminology and often not keeping records in exactly the same manner. They usually describe the records in terms of their functions, so that differences in terminology do not affect coverage. They should include the following information for each series covered by the schedule:

7.2.1 a unique reference number by means of which the series can be identified;

7.2.2 a subject category, such as Accounts, Repairs and Maintenance, Transport, by which the schedule should be arranged;

7.2.3 a definition of the type of record to be found in the series (e.g. plans and specifications, photographs) and the function which the series performs (e.g. planning);

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7.2.4 a description of the series, e.g. 'Correspondence files relating to the preparation and processing of payrolls';

7.2.5 disposal instructions, recommending both the retention period, e.g. 'retain permanently', 'destroy after 1 year, 2 years etc.', and custody, e.g. ' hold in agency pending destruction', 'transfer to records centre two years after closure of files', 'transfer to archives'.

7.3 General schedules may be specified as permissive or mandatory and should be applied in each agency to the extent that they are relevant. They should, therefore, be submitted, in draft, to all agencies for comment before final approval.(1. Form 8) General schedules are permissive when the retention periods for particular series included in them are intended only as guidelines for agencies in preparing their own schedules. They are mandatory, when the observation of the retention periods is compulsory. General schedules including archival series are normally mandatory.

7.4 Agency schedules are based on an inventory of a single agency, which will have records series not common to other agencies; for example, the records series originating in a property agency will be substantially different to those originating in a fiscal agency. They may, however, incorporate retention periods taken from general schedules, where they are relevant.

7.5 Agency schedules will contain substantially the same information as the approved final version of the agency records retention authorisation,

GENERAL DISPOSAL SCHEDULE NO. 6

Entry No.	DISPOSAL CLASS			DISPOSAL ACTION	
	Subject category	Type/function	Description of activity, transaction, etc.	Retention/destruction	Custody
1.1.1	ACCOUNTS	Accounting forms See also . Forms - Accountable Forms . GDS GA			
1.2.1		Payment of accounts	Arrangements for the processing of claims for payment on agency, including refunds, travelling allowances, official/semi-official telephones, etc.		
			a) routine correspondence relating to rendering of and queries on accounts-correctness of charges, calculations, supporting documentation, etc.	Destroy 6 years after action completed	Transfer to Archives 2 years after action completed
			b) applications for approval under Section 46 of Audit Act	Destroy 6 years after action completed	Transfer to Archives 2 years after action completed
1.3.1		Sundry debtor and creditor ledger accounts	Agency copy of sundry debtor notes/creditor ledger cards	Destroy 6 years after last action completed	Transfer to Archives 2 years after action completed

Form B

with two exceptions. They will not include any information justifying the retention periods agreed, as it will have already been taken into consideration during the authorisation procedures; nor will they include any non-current records series identified during the compilation of the inventory, which should either have been destroyed or transferred to archives. Agency schedules should be compiled in accordance with agency requirements and should have a unique referencing system by which each series of records originating within the agency can be identified. (Form 9)

7.6 Reviewing Agency Records Schedules Agency records schedules should be kept under continuous review in the light of:

7.6.1 changes in agency organisation;

7.6.2 changes in record keeping practice;

7.6.3 changes in legal and other retention criteria;

7.6.4 creation and cessation of records series;

7.6.5 changes in office technology, which result in the use of alternative media, e.g. microforms or computer systems, for established records series.

7.7 It is, however, of paramount importance that schedules should not be amended or updated without the express authority of the head of the

RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE

ORGANIZATION CODE	JOB NO.	SECTION/UNIT	SCHEDULE NO.	REV. NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	PAGE	OF
COST ACCOUNTING	25-12		A 18	III	8-2-63	1	14

ITEM NO.	RECORD TITLE	FORM REPORT NO.	A RETENTION SCHEDULE OFFICE	CENTER LOCAL	CENTER CORPORATE	DESTROY	REMARKS
1	Accommodation Sales Order	1225	10			10	
2	Air Force Invoices	408,A;8837,A	1			1	Copies. Record Copy - A23/20
3	Audit of Vendor Time & Material	1363; 1656	6M	18M	8	10	Includes: Vendor Weekly Personnel Roll (1656)
4	Consignments (in and out)		A			*	*When closed. Obsoleted 11-10-61
5	Contract File		CRR			CRR	
6	Correspondence - Gene					AR	
7	Air Shuttle		A				ce copies
	ts Material		6M	18M			
11A	Material Requests - Shop Orders,						
	Purchase Parts Requisitions	8644; 627,C	6M	18M	8	10	
11B	Receiving Memos		6M	18M	8	10	

A RETENTION SCHEDULE LEGEND

A – Active
AR – Annual review
C – Completion or close
CRR – Contract retention requirements
CUR – Current
I – Inactive
M – Months
Numbers – Indicate years

P – Permanent
SUPR – Superseded
T – Terminate
1. Final settlement of a terminated contract
2. Final payment of a completed contract
(Note: Subcontract records to be retained on basis of related prime contract)
3. Termination of employment

VR – Vital records
X – Indefinite

NOTE: Classified records should not be retained in offices longer than five (5) years. Return them to Document Control.

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records management unit, who should be solely responsible for co-ordinating all survey and scheduling procedures.

7.8 Schedules should be reviewed annually by both the records management unit and the agency; proposed revisions can be initiated by either the agency, the head of the records centre or the head of the records management unit. Proposals for revision should be submitted to the head of the records management unit for processing. The form (Form 10) should incorporate the following information:

7.8.1 the name of the agency and the agency unit;

7.8.2 the name, address and telephone number of the officer proposing the amendment;

7.8.3 the records schedule reference, if a revision of a retention period for a scheduled records series is proposed;

7.8.4 the recommended amendment, inclusion or deletion of entries;

7.8.5 an explanation or justification for the proposed revision;

7.8.6 the signatures of the officers applying for and authorising the amendments;

7.8.7 Dates of proposal and authorisation of amendments.

RECORDS RETENTION — REVISIONS

Date

Control No.

TO: Manager, Records Center

FACILITY	DEPARTMENT	DIVISION	SECTION/UNIT

AUTHORITY FOR REVISION(S)

This authorizes you to revise both the Records Retention Schedule, Form BW3803 (Old BW22) and the Records Appraisal Cards, Form BW3817 of the department mentioned above to read as follows:

ITEM NO.	NAME OF RECORD	REPORT NO.	FORM NO.	RETAIN		DESTROY
				Office	Center	

REMARKS

COPIES TO:

MANAGER, RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Form 10

7.9 Review of General Schedules Responsibility for revising general schedules rests with the head of the records management unit, because the information upon which revisions will be based emerges from the survey work which is carried out on agency records by the records management unit. Revisions should be circulated to all agencies on a regular basis, preferably annually.

Notes

1. Australian Archives, General Disposal Schedules, Canberra, 1979

8. Records Disposal - the Records Centre

8.1. Within each agency, staff time will be required to apply general and agency schedules to records series, as records pass out of current use. This implies the regular review of filing systems to identify semi-current or non-current records which are due either for transfer to the records centre for a futher period of retention until their final disposal, for immediate destruction, or for direct transfer to the archives repository.

8.2 Where a records series consists of records of a particular type, such as invoices or case papers, the records can be dealt with in batches on a quarterly, semi-annual or annual basis. Where a series is made up of individual subject files, the agency should institute a system of file-breaks, to ensure that the files do not become bulky, or cover too long a period. At the review, such files should be closed and files that were closed at the previous review should be removed from the filing system, if they have not been referred to during the previous period, or are not likely to be needed for reference in the immediate future. 'Stripping' or 'weeding', where individual papers of little importance are removed from files, should be avoided as an unnecessary waste of time but, wherever possible, documents of an ephemeral nature, such as acknowledgements or notices of meetings, should be held in temporary folders to make their elimination easy.

8.3 The majority of the records reviewed at this stage will be semi-current, and the schedule should require that they be transferred to a

records centre. A records centre is a building, specially designed and constructed, for the low-cost storage, maintenance and communication of semi-current records pending their ultimate disposition; sometimes called an intermediate repository or limbo. Suitable existing accommodation can often be successfully converted for use as a Records Centre. The creation and organisation of records centres is beyond the scope of this study, but they are an essential element in a records management programme. The main difference between a records centre and a store for departmental records is that a records centre is designed for the storage of records series from many departments and agencies and is manned by staff trained in the techniques of handling, retrieving and disposing of records in bulk.(1) Records centres are usually provided and run by the archival or records management unit, but they can sometimes be provided by an agency. In such cases, they should be used only for the storage of records with short term retention periods and they should be organised in accordance with guidelines laid down by the records management unit.

8.4 Semi-current records are normally transferred to the records centre in containers supplied by the records centre to suit the size of the particular records to be transferred, i.e. different containers will be required for files and plans. The records will also be accompanied by two copies of a transfer list which will record the following information:

8.4.1 the name of the agency unit and the name and address of the department or section transferring the records;

8.4.2 the number allocated by the transferring department to each box in the consignment;

8.4.3 a description of the records packed in each box, together with the covering dates of the papers filed within them;

8.4.4 the date and manner of disposal laid down in the records schedule;

8.4.5 the name of the transferring officer and the date of transfer.(Form 11)

8.5. On arrival in the records centre, the staff of the centre should add information to the transfer list about the locations assigned to the boxes within the records centre and one copy of the list, signed and dated by the receiving officer, should be returned to the transferring department as an acknowledgement of receipt.

8.6 Whilst the records remain in the centre, the transfer list is used by the transferring office to retrieve records by quoting the details of the item required, including the records centre location number, on a request form sent through the internal mail or by post, or on the telephone.

8.7. The disposal of records transferred to a records centre is the responsibility of the staff of the records centre. They should not, however, be empowered to implement retention schedules without the express authority of the originating office. Originating offices may be asked to authorise the automatic implementation of a schedule at the time the records are transferred. Otherwise authorisation is normally obtained by means of a form, which should specify the following information:

SAMPLE TRANSFER LIST

RECORDS TRANSFER LIST

TO: [X] CORPORATE RECORDS CENTER [ ] LOCAL/INTERIM RECORDS CENTER

DATE: 9/6/1980 | DIVISION: Calac | RETENTION SCHED. NO.: F-1 | PAGE OF: 1 | 1

DEPT./ORGN. NAME: Finance | DEPT./ORGN. NO. SECTION/UNIT: 64-78 Accounts Payable | NO. OF BOXES/UNITS: 19

PLANT/FAC.: A-1 | BLDG./ZONE: 66 | FLOOR: 1 | ROOM: 38 | COLUMN: | MANAGER OR DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE: R. Hilton | TRANSFER LIST PREPARED BY: M. M. Knaack | EXTENSION: 76507

RETENTION SCHED ITEM NO.	RECORD TITLE AND FILING ARRANGEMENT (Use same title as in Retention Schedule)	DATE OF RECORD FROM	DATE OF RECORD TO	ORGN. BOX NO.	RECORDS CENTER USE LOCAL/INTERIM PERM. BOX NO.	RECORDS CENTER USE LOCAL/INTERIM TEMP. BOX NO.	RECORDS CENTER USE CRC PERM. BOX NO.
55	Paid Invoices - General						
	AAA Diving Service-Atlas	1978					10001
	Atlas Packing & Rubber-Cablecraft					2	10002
	Cadillac Plastic-DeMornay Bonardi					3	10003
	Deeny Construction-Enginneered Sys					4	10004
	Eng. Devel. Corp-General Electric					5	10005
	General Hardwood-Hagan Controls					6	10006
	W.F. Hall-Internat'l Harvester					7	10007
	Internat'l Sales-Lincoln Elec.					8	10008
	Linde Company-N.C. Marine					9	10009
	Nat'l Asso. Acct's-Pac. NW Bell					10	10010
	Pacific NW Ind.-Petty Cash (Aug.)					11	10011
	Petty Cash (Sep.)-Puget Pipe					12	10012
	Puget Sound Salvage-Seaport Co.					13	10013
	Sears Roebuck & Co.-Seattle Lumber					14	10014
	Seattle Marine-Seattle Steel					15	10015
	Seattle Stevedore-Tensolite					16	10016
	Texaco, Inc.-Valstep-King Corp.					17	10017
	Valley Auto Parts-Western Union					18	10018
	Westinghouse-Zidell Explorations					19	10019
	Interfiles	1976	1977			19	

RECORDS CENTER USE

	RECEIVED BY	CHECKED	DATE	VOLUME	K..ROEX POSTED	CUP EDP
L/IRC						
CRC	[illegible] 9/14	M. Michaels	9/15/80	19 C.F.	J Smith	

F = to these records write or phone the Records Center

Form 11

8.7.1 The names of the agency and the agency unit and the name and address of the originating office;

8.7.2 the records schedule reference number of the records series;

8.7.3 the description and covering dates of the records due for disposal;

8.7.4 a request, if necessary, for the extension of the retention period and a justification for the request;

8.7.5 signatures of the officers responsible for requesting and authorising disposal;

8.7.6 dates of issue and return of the form.(Form 12)

8.8. Generally, authorisation of the disposal of records is delegated to one or more officers in the originating office, but to avoid unnecessary delay, the forms usually indicate that the requirements of the records schedule will be implemented within a specified period, say four weeks, if no reply is received from the originating office within that period.

8.9 Where records are to be transferred to the archives repository when they are non-current, the manager of the records centre should notify the head of the repository. Where a series is subject to a specific sampling procedure, such as selection on a systematic basis, the work should be carried out in the records centre before the transfer takes place.

NOTIFICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECORDS TO BE DESTROYED AT RECORDS CENTER

NOTIFICATION

_____ (LOCATION) _____ (DATE)

_____ (NAME) _____ (TITLE) _____ (LOCATION)

This is to notify you that the following records will be destroyed at the Records Center on _____
Should further retention be required of any records listed, please rule out such records, indicating in Column (j) the approximate date each record may be destroyed.

Form No.	Description or Name of Form	F. C. C. Item No.	Period Covered by Records From	To	Form T-1841 No.	Date	Storage No.	Location	Date to be Destroyed (If Further Retention Required)
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)

Prepared by the Records Center and forwarded to the departments at the time records are ready for destruction. Departments may approve or extend retention period.

Pacific Company records ☐

Bell of Nevada Company records ☐

Signature _____
RECORDS CENTER SUPERVISOR

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

_____ (LOCATION) _____ (DATE)

RECORDS CENTER SUPERVISOR _____ (Location)

Receipt is hereby acknowledged of the above notification of records to be destroyed.

Signature _____

Title _____

Form 12

Where, however, a series is due for a file-by-file review, it may be more convenient to transfer the records in batches to the archives repository, unless the proportion of the records likely to survive this review is small.

8.10 If the records are to be destroyed at the end of their period of retention in the records centre, due account of the confidentiality of the information that they contain must be taken in selecting the method of destruction. In the case of unclassified records, which constitute the vast majority, sale as waste paper is the most effective and economic method. It may, however, be necessary to sort and grade paper before selling it, as some grades, such as tab cards, are worth much more than others. Classifed records must be defaced in some way before disposal. Some financial return can be obtained by shredding before sale as waste paper, but fine shredding, which is necessary for highly classified documents, is a laborious and time consuming business and pulping is one alternative. Incineration is another alternative, which is often specified for top secret material. Whatever method of destruction is adopted, strict precautions must be taken to ensure that highly classified waste is actually destroyed, and it is essential that a record of the destruction of each batch of records is maintained, as well as the authority for destruction.

Notes

1. Leahy and Cameron, Modern Records Management and Benedon, Records Management, provide detailed descriptions of the establishment and

organisation of records centres. See also Artel Ricks, op.cit.; Victor Gordos jr. (ed) Reader for Archives and Records Centre Buildings, Society of American Archivists, Washington DC, 1970; A.w. Mabbs and Guy Duboscq, The organisation of intermediate records storage, Unesco, Paris, 1974.

9. Records Scheduling - Appraisal of Special Categories of Records

9.1 Machine Readable Records

9.1.1 Machine readable records are those that are held in media which require the use of a computer and associated software to interpret and manipulate the information that they contain. (1)

9.1.2 Technological advances in methods of recording and retrieving information by Automatic Data Processing (ADP) have had a profound effect on the form in which records are kept. Most agencies will have had records on magnetic tape and disk, as well on paper or microform for many years, but the volume of information being held 'on-line' in the computer is increasing rapidly. This is happening in two ways; firstly more information maintained on mainframe computer is being accessed only by Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) or Visual Display (VDU) terminals with no 'hard copy' on paper or microform; secondly, the development of the microcomputer as a work station, inter-communicating with other similar work stations and with the main frame computer, has resulted in the development of electronic mail, which means that internal memoranda, reports and other records are no longer necessarily accessible in hard copy and are being held on 'floppy disks', unless they are deemed to be of sufficient importance to be transferred to the mainframe computer. At the same time, the high cost of main frame storage is imposing limits on the volume of information that can be retained on-line for general access; hence pressure is being put on those that are using the system to make snap decisions on the retention of information that they have been

responsible for putting into it.

9.1.3 It is no bad thing to make managers conscious of the volume of information for which they are responsible in the hope that they will discipline themselves to create and maintain fewer and better records, whether they be in traditional hard copy form or held on-line. Nevertheless, the 'information revolution' has not altered the basic retention requirements for records, in whatever form that they may be maintained. For example accounting records, which in many countries are subject to legal retention periods of six years or more, must be retained for those periods, in whatever form they may have been created and maintained. Many records, such as personnel records, which are also increasingly being held on line, have even longer retention requirements.

9.1.4 Records surveys and the development of records schedules will therefore be of even greater significance in the future because of the need to decide not only the length of time, but also the form in which records should be retained. As a means of manipulating and communicating information, the computer is by far the best medium. However, as a means of holding records for long periods it is much less satisfactory, not only because of the rapidity with which new hardware systems create problems of obsolescence, but also because the nature of the electronic media in which the data is held makes it vulnerable to environmental factors, such as temperature, humidity and magnetic fields and, what is even more alarming, to both unauthorised access and to large scale forgery. The more information that is held on-line, the more elaborate will be the security precautions needed and the greater will be the danger of loss and destruction of data.

9.1.5 It is of vital importance for the future integrity of machine readable records, as distinct from the information that they contain, that conscious decisions should be taken as to the medium in which they should be retained. It is therefore essential that records managers should, in future, when they are designing records schedules, ensure that the appropriate medium is selected for agency records at all stages of their development, so that the information that they contain is maintained for the full period of retention.

9.1.6 In some cases it may be desirable to transfer the information to an alternative medium for long term retention, either by printing it out on paper, or copying it directly on microfilm or microfiche. This is particularly necessary in the case of information held exclusively on 'floppy disks', which are easily damaged and are only suitable for short term retention, if backup copies are made at regular intervals. Where the information is held on a mainframe computer, however, it may be desirable to retain the data in machine readable form, so that the ability to manipulate it on a computer is maintained. Typical examples of data of this kind are national, local or special census records.

9.1.7 The need to hold data in machine readable form will grow as more information is held exclusively on-line, but the cost of doing so will be high, because it is not sufficient simply to retain the tapes or disks on which the data is recorded, but also to preserve full details of the software programs relating to them and the manner in which they were compiled and maintained. The evaluation of each program should, therefore, be made at an early stage of its development to ensure that tapes or disks are selected at appropriate intervals for long term or

permanent preservation. The interval appropriate to each individual program will depend on the way in which the data is updated. The more frequently that the update takes place, the shorter will be the interval, to ensure that no essential data is lost through updating. The following information will, therefore, be required for the appraisal of machine readable records, in addition to that required for other types of record, set out in Chapter 5.10:

9.1.7.1 the purpose for which the data was collected;

9.1.7.2 details of the source documents used as input;

9.1.7.3 details of file output and its use;

9.1.7.4 details of periodic updates.

9.1.8 It is also important to ensure that when machine readable records are retained for long periods, hardware is available to read them. This implies that when a new generation of computers is acquired by an agency, the ability to read earlier generations of tapes and disks is retained, either by ensuring that the new hardware is compatible with the old, or by converting semi-current as well as current data, so that they can be read on any new operating system when it is introduced, because retrospective conversion will be much more expensive. However, as programs used on obsolete systems will, in most cases, have been superseded, it may be undesirable on economic or other grounds to retain the tapes or disks associated with them in the original computer centre. Under such circumstances it would be desirable to establish a Data Archiving Centre

(DAC), under the control of the archives, where the necessary operating systems can be provided and the tapes and disks stored in ideal conditions.

9.1.9 It should, however, be recognized, that the preservation of the tapes and disks in a Data Archiving Centre will be costly, because of the measures that must be taken to safeguard the integrity of electronic data, which will decay, sometimes very rapidly, without proper and regular maintenance. Cost will therefore be a major factor in determining the medium in which machine readable records should be preserved, when the systems themselves are obsolete. (2)

9.2 Microforms

9.2.1 Microforms have been in common use for many years:

9.2.1.1 for substitution, where original paper records are microfilmed and the originals destroyed to save office and storage accommodation and to speed the retrieval of information;

9.2.1.2 for exchange of information, where the original paper records are retained and microform copies are used to disseminate the information that they contain;

9.2.1.3 for security, where microforms are used for reference, to safeguard the originals against loss, damage or theft;

9.2.1.4 as Computer Output Microform (COM), where microform is used as an alternative to paper for computer output.

9.2.2 Where microforms are used as a substitute for, or as an alternative to paper originals, they must be inventoried and appraised in accordance with the procedures already described.(3) The value of microforms as evidence in a court of law will however depend on the legal requirements of the particular country in which they are created and used. These will generally involve meticulous recording of the details of the microform system and of the circumstances under which the copies used in evidence were made. These factors should be taken into account both in the design and the ultimate appraisal of a microform system.(4)

9.2.3 The microforms in common use for recording documents are 16mm and 35mm roll film and microfiche, although 8mm and larger sizes of roll film, such as 70mm and 105mm, are also found. 35mm and the larger sizes of microfilm are generally used for recording large documents, such as maps, plans and engineering drawings. In such cases, the images on the film are usually cut and inserted into aperture cards, that is to say, into card mounts upon which information can be written for indexing purposes.

9.2.4 16mm microfilm is used in three modes:

9.2.4.1 simplex, where documents are filmed in sequence, reading either from edge to edge of the film or along its length;

9.2.4.2 duplex, where the front and back of documents are filmed side by side in one operation;

9.2.4.3 duo, where documents are filmed in sequence up one side of the film and down the other, which, in effect, creates an 8mm format.

9.2.5 Microfilm can be used as roll film, assisted in most cases by some form of automated retrieval. The most sophisticated form is Computer Assisted Retrieval (CAR), where the reels of film are indexed on a computer to speed up the process of the retrieval of information. It can also be found in association with microfilm jackets, where 16mm simplex or duplex film is cut into strips and inserted into clear acetate or plastic jackets, which can be indexed and filed in the same way as index cards. The commonest size is approximately A6 (105mm X 148mm). In some formats both 16mm and 35mm film can be inserted in the same jacket. The main advantage of the jacket is its updatability. It is therefore commonly used for subject files, to which it may be necessary to add documents from time to time.

9.2.6 Microfiche is a translucent sheet of film on which documents are filmed in sequence. The commonest size is A6 (105 X 148mm). Page capacities vary from 98 to 420 A4 size documents. Space is available at the head of each fiche for index information, so that the fiche may be filed in index cabinets. Fiche is frequently used for records that do not require updating, such as reports and technical data. It is also widely used as Computer Output Microform for periodic reports requiring wide distribution. Updatable forms of microfiche have been developed, which allow additional images to be added to a fiche which has already been used. This confers upon it characteristics similar to those of a microfilm jacket. Microfiche can also be found in association with

9.2.7 The durability of microform depends upon the type of emulsion used to form the images and upon the method of processing. The three commonest types of emulsion are silver halide, diazo and vesicular. The most durable is the silver halide emulsion, which should always be selected for long term or permanent preservation. Care must, however, be taken to ensure that the film has been properly processed to remove residual chemicals, such as thiosulphate, which can cause premature ageing. Diazo and vesicular microforms are used to make cheap copies for general distribution for short-term reference. They should not be used or selected for long term preservation.(4)

9.2.8 Without exception microforms require specialised equipment on which to read them. Jacketed microfilm and microfiche can be read on the same equipment. 16mm and 35mm may sometimes be read on the same equipment, but, as the magnification requirements for these forms are different, different types of equipment are desirable. Aperture cards also require specialized readers, usually capable of enlarging the images to a size commensurate with the original record, which can be considerable in the case of a plan or engineering drawing. It is therefore essential that suitable reading equipment should be available throughout the period of retention assigned to a microform series.

9.2.9 Where the microform has formed part of a manual system of retrieval, the reading equipment is normally standard and easily available. Where however it forms part of an automated retrieval system, such as CAR, it is essential to ensure that the necessary hardware, which

can be very specialised, is retained for the same period as the microform, which would otherwise be virtually useless.

9.2.10 Standardisation of both the microforms and of the retrieval systems used by an agency is desirable in the interests of the long term retention of information and care must be taken to ensure that suitable reading and retrieval equipment is available in a records centre to which microforms are transferred. Where long term or archival retention is scheduled for a series, air-conditioned storage areas, with strict control over temperature and humidity should be provided. Inert plastic or metal boxes should be used rather than cartons, to prevent redox blemishes.

9.3 Audio-visual Records

9.3.1 Audio-visual records fall into four main categories:

9.3.1.1 cinematograph film, of which the commonest types are 16mm and 35mm, although 8mm, 9.5mm and 70mm can also be found;

9.3.1.2 video recordings, which have characteristics in common with both cinematograph film and sound recordings and are in the form either of magnetic tape or disk;

9.3.1.3 sound recordings, which are commonly found in the form of both disks and magnetic tapes, but early recordings can also be found in other form such as wax covered cylinders;

9.3.1.4 still photographs, both negative and positive.

9.3.2 Audio-visual records are important for

9.3.2.1 their evidential or functional value, in documenting the policies and programmes of sponsoring agencies, or complementing documents in other media;

9.3.2.2 their historical or research value, in documenting the economic, political, scientific, technological, social and cultural life of a country, either as actualities (e.g. documentaries and newsfilm) or as dramatisations.

9.3.3 Audio-visual records held by most agencies will be important mainly for their evidential or functional value, but some agencies will undoubtedly maintain press offices or units for the production of documentary and publicity films and video tapes, which will be important also for their historical value.

9.3.4 The first two categories of audio-visual records, cinematograph film and video tape, have characteristics in common as moving image records, although the format is different. The most important factor in the management of moving image resources is the retention of all elements for all productions until disposal is actually scheduled, to ensure that film is not destroyed nor videotape erased for recycling before items have been selected for permanent preservation in the archives. (5)

9.3.5 Moving image records require item by item scheduling and the inventory must include details of both negative and positive film and of unedited (i.e. material not used in the finished production) as well as

edited footage. The quantity of unedited footage of film or tape is usually considerable, but it can be of equal evidential and sociological value. A final decision on the amount of unedited footage to be retained should depend on a cost-benefit analysis.

9.3.6 Related documentation should be scheduled for retention for the same period as the film or tape. It will include production files, scripts, stills and cuttings from newspapers and periodicals.

9.3.7 Sound recordings differ from moving image records mainly in the absence of visual images. The need to retain related documentation is equally important, but the requirement to schedule unedited footage will apply only to audio tapes, as disks, cylinders and other formats are generally complete in themselves.

9.3.8 Still photographs, which are purely visual images, are in both negative and positive format. Negatives can be either film or glass plate; positives can be prints, or film and glass slides suitable for projection. Within an agency photographs will frequently be found in association with files or other related documentation and should be surveyed and scheduled with them. The format, size and type of each photograph or group of photographs, together with their subject matter, should be noted.

9.3.9 Collections of photographs and photographic negatives created by departments during the course of their work, such as press offices or technical and scientific organisations will need special treatment. Large collections of this type are usually registered or indexed and the

registers and indexes, copies of which should be transferred to the records centre or archives with the photographs, should form the basis for appraisal. Unindexed collections are difficult to appraise at the administrative stage and should normally be referred directly to the archives.

9.3.10 Cinematograph film, video tapes, sound recordings and photographic slides for projection require specialised equipment for viewing, which suffers from a high level of incompatiblity and obsolescence. For example 9.5mm stock has been discontinued and much of the projection equipment has already been destroyed. Where such records are scheduled for long term retention, it is essential that suitable equipment for viewing is available in the records centre or archives to which it is transferred. The provision of such facilities can be costly and consideration may have to be given to the establishment of central archives for both moving image records and sound recordings.

9.3.11 The conditions under which black and white photographic records can be stored are not critical, although the creation of a specialised archive may be advisable for large collections which require specialized forms of cataloguing. The negatives should be regarded as 'masters' from which positive prints can be taken and should, if possible, be stored in air-conditioned accommodation. Positives should be used for reference.

9.3.12 The conditions under which cinematograph film and tape are stored are much more critical and air-conditioning is desirable for long term preservation. Modern cinematograph film has a non-inflammable, cellulose acetate base, but early films have a nitro-cellulose base which is highly

inflammable and becomes unstable with age. Early appraisal and destruction of nitro-cellulose based film is therefore essential and where a decision is taken to retain such film as archival, it should be converted to cellulose acetate stock as soon as possible. In the meantime it should be stored in total isolation.

9.3.13 Problems may also arise over the preservation of colour film, which fades on exposure to light. Such film should be stored in complete darkness and, for archival purposes, low temperatures are required in addition.

9.4 Cartographic Records

9.4.1 Cartographic records fall into three main categories, maps, plans (including elevations) and engineering drawings:

9.4.1.1 a map is a representation of a relatively large part of the earth's surface, its physical and political features, delineated on a flat surface of paper or other material, according to a definite scale or projection;

9.4.1.2 a plan is a large scale map of a district or town, or a drawing of any object made by projection upon a flat surface, such as a floor plan of a building (elevations are drawings of buildings made in projection on a vertical plane).

9.4.1.3 an engineering drawing is a plan or elevation of engineering works, including constructional drawings and detailed

drawings of pieces of machinery.(6)

9.4.2 They are found as printed or manuscript originals, which are to be preferred for long term or archival retention to other formats, such as transparencies made for reproduction and photographic, thermal or diazo prints. In the absence of the originals, transparencies and photographic prints are to be preferred for long term retention.

9.4.3 Mention has been made elsewhere to the practice of microfilming cartographic records on 35mm and larger sizes of microfilm, which is cut and inserted in aperture cards for easy reference.(7) It is undesirable in such cases to destroy the originals, because of the difficulty of reproducing exactly to scale from a microfilm copy. For this reason, the microfilm copies should be used for reference, as they are easier to handle and occupy less space; the originals should be stored in low cost accommodation, preferably in a records centre, for use when accurate scale reference is required.

9.4.4 Appraisal criteria are similar to those for other paper records, but care must be taken in selecting items for permanent preservation to ensure that copies of successive editions of maps are retained, which show changes over a significant period. Care must also be taken to retain plans of services, e.g. sewers and outfalls, with the architectural drawings, in respect of standing buildings. Registers and indexes of maps, plans and engineering drawings, if they exist, are essential appraisal tools. Amongst other things, they will enable the appraiser to discard detailed engineering drawings of plant items that have been superseded through modification or reconstruction.

Notes

1. Wilson Report, p.121

2. The appraisal and preservation of machine readable records is discussed by Michael Cook in Archives and the Computer, London, 1980, pp.161-178. See also, The Public Record Office, The Selection and Preparation for Transfer of Machine-Readable Records, London, 1974; National Archives and Records Service of the USA, Handbook of Recommended Environmental Conditions and Handling Procedures for Magnetic Tape, Washington D.C., 1972

3. See Chapters 4 and 5

4. For a detailed analysis of the legal requirements of different countries for admissibility of microforms as evidence, see George Weill, The Admissibility of Microforms as Evidence: a RAMP Study, Unesco, Paris, 1981

5. Sam Kula, The Archival Appraisal of moving images: a RAMP Study with guidelines, Unesco. Paris, 1983, p.85

6. Direction des Archives de France, Manuel D'Archivistique, Paris, 1970, pp.474-471

7. See Chapter 9.2.3

10. Summary Guidelines

10.1 Records Management is concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, maintenance and disposal of records throughout their life-cycle, which can be divided into three phases, current, semi-current and non-current. Archives are non-current records preserved because they are deemed to be of long term or permanent value.(1.3,1.4)

10.2 A Records Survey is the process of gathering basic information about records, their quantity, physical form, type, location, physical condition, storage facilities, rate of accumulation, use and similar data, for the purpose of planning acquisition and disposal programmes, microfilming operations, new facilities and related archival activities. (1.6)

10.3 A Record Schedule is a document describing the records of an organisation, showing all the actions to be taken for their disposal, including microfilming, file-breaks and destruction or preservation as archives, after the completion of a specified retention period.(1.7)

10.4 The Objectives of a Records Survey are to ensure that records schedules are comprehensive and include all forms of records and to assist in the development of more efficient systems of record keeping and information retrieval. The Objectives of a Records Schedule are to plan the life of a record from the time of its creation or receipt, to the completion of its life-cycle, either by destruction or preservation.(1.10)

10.5 The application of records schedules saves time by reducing the volume of unessential records which must be searched for information; saves space by removing records no longer in current use from office accommodation; avoids costs for the purchase of additional space and filing equipment; promotes efficient control over records.(1.10)

10.6 Organisations intending to embark upon a programme of records surveys and schedules, should be prepared to establish a records management unit, employing specialist staff, to develop systems for the conduct of records surveys and schedules; to train their own and agency staff to operate the systems; to provide a consultative service on records management systems for agencies and departments; to provide other services as may be required by the new systems, such as records centres and microfilm bureaux.(2.1, 2.6)

10.7 Where there is a shortage of experienced professional records managers from whom to select a suitable head for the records management unit, an outside consultant may be employed to establish it and to undertake the initial training of the staff. Once the unit has been established, suitable training courses should be provided for professional staff.

10.8 The role of the records management unit should be defined by administrative regulation or by legislation, to give the head of the unit sufficient authority to inspect the records of all agencies with a view to surveying and scheduling their records and prohibiting the destruction of records in advance of a survey. Responsibility for implementing the survey should rest with the head of the agency, but responsibility for the

work of the survey and for approval of the schedules should rest with the head of the records management unit. Agencies should appoint officers to liase with the records management unit.(2.7)

10.9 Where the records management unit is part of the archival organisation, responsibility for the final approval of records schedules may be delegated to the head of the unit by the chief archivist. If the unit is independent of the archives, machinery should be established to ensure that schedules are submitted for final approval by the chief archivist.

10.10 A records survey falls naturally into three stages:

10.10.1 Preparation, when agencies are notified that a survey is being initiated and a preliminary investigation of the records of the agency is carried out;

10.10.2 Inventory, when details of the records series held by each agency unit are obtained;

10.10.3 Appraisal, when the records series identified during the inventory stage are evaluated to determine appropriate retention periods for them.(3.1-3.4)

10.11 The Preliminary Investigation is designed to identify the volume of records held by each agency unit, their location and the equipment and floor space occupied, in order to plan the preparation of the inventory. The investigation should be carried out by a qualified team headed by a

records analyst working under the supervision of the records management unit. A questionnaire for the guidance of the unit team can be of value in ensuring that all the information essential for the preparation of the inventory is gathered.(3.6,3.7)

10.12 The core of a records survey is the inventory of the records series in the custody of each agency. A Records Inventory is a complete listing of the records of an agency, by series or category, with sufficient supporting information to enable an informed appraisal and evaluation to be made. A Records Series is a body of records arranged in a particular order (numerical, chronological or alphabetical), or arising from a specific activity or purpose, and filed and used as a unit. The inventory should be carried out by the same team that carried out the preliminary investigation.(4.1-4.3)

10.13 Once the inventory has begun, no records should be destroyed or removed without the knowledge of the team. The quality of the inventory will depend on the accuracy with which records series are defined and titles are allocated.(4.4,4.5) Some series will require special consideration, such as cartographic records, microforms, magnetic tapes and audio-visual records.(4.6-4.8,9.1-9.4) There are advantages to be gained from starting the inventory on non-current records in storage areas. The progress of the inventory should be monitored to ensure that no items are overlooked.(4.8,4.9)

10.14 If the inventory is sufficiently detailed, it can be used to identify records management problems and lead to the introduction of alternative systems of record keeping. It should therefore, be reviewed

and updated annually.(4.11)

10.15 On the completion of the inventory, the forms should be sorted into alphabetical order of records series for appraisal. The data derived from the inventory forms can, with advantage, be keyed into a data management program on a microcomputer for the preparation of draft records schedules.(4.12,4.13)

10.16 Appraisal is a basic archival function of determining the eventual disposal of records based upon their current and future administrative, fiscal and legal uses and their evidential, informational and research values; sometimes referred to as evaluation or selective retention. It takes place at two levels. At the first level, a provisional evaluation of each series and a recommended retention period must be submitted to the agency unit, to enable agency staff to determine how long they will need to retain it for business purposes; at the second level, the archives service must determine which of the records series have archival value and should be retained.(5.1-5.11)

10.17 When a provisional appraisal of each series of records by the records analyst has been completed, his recommendations should be incorporated in a Records Retention Authorisation specifying the period that the records in each series are current and should remain in the originating office; the point at which they become semi-current and should be transferred to a records centre for further retention; the ultimate disposal of the records when they are non-current, either by destruction or transfer to archives.(6.1.6.2)

10.18 The Records Retention Authorisation should also specify records vital to the survival of the organisation for the purpose of disaster planning; records series too bulky for complete retention and the method of sampling to be employed to preserve a representative selection; records series which may be converted from one medium to another, e.g. paper to microfilm, to improve the speed and efficiency of retrieval and to save space; records series subject to restrictions on access.(6.3)

10.19 The Records Retention Authorisation should be submitted to the agency, to the archives service and, where appropriate, to other agencies, such as legal, financial and administration for approval. As soon as the final approvals have been received, records already time-expired should be destroyed; semi-current records should be transferred to a records centre; records identified as archives should be transferred to the archives and continuing records series should be incorporated into a records schedule. (6.4-6.6)

10.20 Records Schedules are the responsibility of the head of the records management unit. They are of two types; general schedules based upon inventories of several offices performing substantially the same work, but not always using the same terminology or keeping records in exactly the same way; agency schedules based on an inventory of a single agency, which will have records series not common to other agencies and will incorporate retention periods taken from general schedules.(7.1-7.4)

10.21 Agency schedules will contain substantially the same information as the approved final version of the agency records retention authorisation, with the exception of information justifying the agreed retention periods

and non-curent series which have been destroyed or transferred to archives. Schedules should be reviewed annually in the light of changes in organisation, record keeping practice, legal or other retention criteria, the creation and cessation of records series and changes in office technology.(7.4-7.8)

10.22 It should be the responsibility of agency staff to apply general and agency schedules as records pass out of current use. This implies the regular review of filing systems to identify semi-current and non-current records which are due for transfer to the records centre for a further period of retention until their final disposal, or for immediate destruction, or for direct transfer to the archives.(8.1,8.2)

10.23 A Records Centre is a building, usually specially designed and constructed, for low-cost storage, maintenance and communication of semi-current records pending their ultimate disposition; sometimes called an intermediate repository or limbo. The main difference between a records centre and a store for departmental records is that it receives records from many agencies and that it is manned by staff trained in the techniques of handling, retrieving and disposing of records in bulk. They are usually provided and run by either the records management or the archival unit.(8.3)

10.24 Semi-current records are transferred to a records centre in standard containers supplied by the records centre, accompanied by transfer lists, in accordance with procedures laid down by the records management unit. Whilst the records remain in the records centre, the

transfer lists are used for the retrieval and disposal of records.(8.4-8.6)

10.25 The disposal of records in accordance with the retention schedules is the responsibility of the records centre, on the authority of the originating office. Due account must be taken of confidentiality of the information contained in the records in selecting the method of destruction. Security classified records must be defaced in some way before disposal.(8.7-8.9)

10.26 Technological advances in methods of recording and retrieving information through the use of machine readable records held on-line in computers, are having a profound effect on the management of records. These records must be included within the ambit of records surveys and schedules, but special attention must be paid to the medium in which the information derived from such records is held for long term retention. For permanent preservation, printing out on paper or microforms may be desirable, but some information may have to be retained on magnetic tape, so that it can continue to be manipulated on a computer. In such cases care must be taken to ensure that hardware is available on which to read the records, for as long as the tapes must be retained.(9.1)

11. Select Bibliography

11.1 This bibliography is not exhaustive, because the practice of records surveying and scheduling paper records set out in this study is generally in accordance with standard procedures, which are repeated, with modifications in many publications on records management. On the other hand, the effects of the new office technology on surveys and schedules are still being evaluated and no standard practices have yet been evolved, with the result that sound texts are few and far between. It is, divided into four sections:

11.1.1 Bibliographies

11.1.2 Basic texts on records management

11.1.3 Aspects of surveying and scheduling

11.1.4 Practical applications

11.2 Bibliographies

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Appendix A

THE USE OF MICROCOMPUTERS FOR RECORDS SCHEDULING

The General Nursing Council for England and Wales

1. The General Nursing Council for England and Wales (GNC) was established by the Nurses Registration Act 1919. The functions of the Council were:

1.1 to maintain a professional register for qualified nurses;

1.2 to establish a uniform system of training for student nurses and to approve training schools;

1.3 to set a standard examination for State Registered Nurses (SRN);

1.4 to maintain professional discipline.

2. The responsibilities of the GNC were extended by the Nurses Act 1943 to include a Roll for Assistant Nurses, renamed State Enrolled Nurses (SEN) by the Nurses (Amendment) Act 1961. SEN's are admitted to training as pupil nurses and enrolled by assessment not examination.

3. The number of Registered and Enrolled nurses had increased to such an extent by 1959, that a decision was taken to convert the nurses registration files to jacketed microfilm to save office accommodation. The process was completed by 1973. The Registers and Rolls, in which were recorded a summary of the qualifications of each registered and

enrolled nurse, were also computerised in 1973.

4. The General Nursing Council handed over its functions on 30 June 1983 to three new organisations established by the Nurses, Midwives and Health Visitors Act 1979; the United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting (UKCC) and the English and Welsh National Boards for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting. The UKCC is now responsible for registration and the maintenance and development of standards of training and professional conduct. The National Boards are responsible for the implementation of education and training policy and the examination and assessment of student and pupil nurses. The National Boards are also responsible for investigating cases of misconduct. At the time of the handover the number of names on the Register and Roll was over 750,000.

5. Prior to 1979 when the reorganisation was authorised by statute, no survey or schedules of the records of the GNC had been made since its inception in 1919, apart from the measures taken to microfilm and computerise the Register and Roll. In July 1982, therefore, the Council decided to appoint a Consultant in Records Management (the Author) to undertake a preliminary investigation of the problem and to make recommendations for the future management of the records, as they wished to ensure the preservation of their archives in the Public Record Office.

6. The Consultant's Report, which was submitted on 25 August 1982, indicated that some 2000 cubic feet of records required scheduling and recommended that:

6.1 a detailed inventory of the records should be made over a period of four weeks in order to prepare retention schedules;

6.2 the records scheduled as archives should be transferred to the Public Record Office at Kew, under the arrangements then under negotiation between the Council and the Keeper of Public Records.

6.3 a project team should be recruited to dispose of the records, including the processing of the archives for transfer to the Public Record Office.

6.4 an archive copy of the computerised Register and Roll as at 30 June 1983 should be made for the Public Record Office.

7. These recommendations were accepted by the General Nursing Council in September 1982 and the Keeper of Public Records agreed to accept all archive material more than five years old, on the understanding that the remainder of the archives up to 30 June 1983 should be transferred as soon as they could be released by the departments of the new organisations. The records were to be prepared in accordance with the Public Record Office requirements for government departments and the transfer was to be supervised by Mr. Kelvin Smith, one of the PRO Inspecting Officers.

8. The inventory was completed on the 30 November 1982. The results are summarized in Table I. 2219 cubic feet of records were inventoried, of which 626 cubic feet were considered to be of archival value and a further 499 cubic feet were to be reviewed as potentially archival. The inventory was carried out on the basis of a specially designed Inventory

and Appraisal Form. (Table II)

9. The appraisal and scheduling of each series of records had to be concentrated into a comparatively short space of time in order to meet the 30 June 1983 deadline for the handover. Appraisal data were therefore logged on to a Compsoft Data Management System (DMS) program on a Commodore CBM 8032 computer, with a CBM 8050 dual floppy disk drive and a CBM 8026 printer. This program was used in combination with a Wordcraft 80 word processor program on the same equipment for the preparation of standard introductory material for the schedules.

10. The schedules were classified by department (Table III) and were submitted for approval under a title page (Table IV/1) and a general introduction (Table IV/2). Items in each schedule (Table IV/3) were assigned a unique five figure number, the first two digits of which formed the departmental classification number and the last three digits, the number assigned to the series within the department. The title consisted of three elements, the name of the department, the type of record, the subject matter of the series, and the volume. Columns 4-7 included retention data; columns 8 and 9 identified record copies held in other departments and their retention periods, where appropriate. The final column was devoted to remarks.

11. The draft schedules were submitted to the heads of departments for approval and both the format and the facility with which updating could be accomplished on the DMS program greatly speeded up schedule development.

12. A project team was recruited in March 1983 with the aid of a grant

from the Manpower Services Commission. It consisted of a records manager, five archives assistants to identify and catalogue the records and fourteen part-time project assistants to repair, box and label files for transfer to the Public Record Office. The project was scheduled to last for six months but was extended by a further four months to the end of January 1984.

13. Under the supervision of the records manager, the archives assistants identified each series of records from the inventory and appraisal sheets and, with the help of the project assistants, processed them in accordance with the requirements of the departmental retention schedules. The manuscript lists that they prepared were put on to the word processor and amended in agreement with the Public Record Office before printing. (Table V)

14. During the course of the project, the basements and offices were cleared of non-current records. The team itself processed 1267 cubic feet of records, of which 513 cubic feet were catalogued, repaired and transferred to the Public Record Office, comprising over 8000 files, volumes, plans, photographs, microforms and other records. Of the remainder, 273 cubic feet were destroyed and 418 cubic feet, which were scheduled for further retention, were processed and stored in a records centre created in basement accommodation cleared of non-current records.

15. The Departments of the GNC were responsible for processing 952 cubic feet of records remaining in their custody, in accordance with the schedules approved by the heads of departments. These records were either destroyed or transferred to the new organisations.

General Nursing Council Records Inventory

Analysis of Records held by Departments 30/11/81

Department	Archives cu.ft	Review cu.ft	Other cu.ft	Total cu.ft
Finance	47	110	201	358
Registrar:				
Distribution	3	40	83	126
Filing	37	38	4	79
Offices	9	22	17	43
Council and Committees	125	11	98	234
Basement	91	116	11	218
Registration	98	57	170	325
Discipline	-	4	60	64
Overseas	18	2	230	250
Examinations	80	8	6	94
Education	72	41	107	220
Solicitor	4	5	52	61
Data Processing	3	4	4	11
Personnel	-	25	20	45
Administration	30	16	31	77
Other	9	-	-	9
Total	626	499	1094	2219

ADVANCE LETTERS - DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

ORGANISATION	DEPARTMENT	SECTION	UNIT
GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL	FINANCE	—	—

YEARS	ARRANGEMENT	AREA	LOCATION	EQU'MENT	CU.FT.		DISPOSAL
49-71	CHRONOLOGICAL	H2	A4	555	0·25	A	16/12/
80-82	- ditto -	H6	A2	C4	0·25	A	16/12/

DESCRIPTION

NOTIFICATIONS OF WAGES AND SALARIES AGREEMENTS

Office 0·5 cu.ft
Stores cu.ft
St'room cu.ft

RECORDS APPRAISAL

ITEM NO.	RECORDS TITLE	YEARS	VOLUME
11001	FINANCE ADVANCE LETTERS DEPT. OF HEALTH	1961-82	0·5

RECORD COPY REGISTRAR NON-RECORD COPY

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

STATUTORY

YEARS

COMPARABLE RETENTION

NIL

MIN.	MAX.	AVER.
		—

ARCHIVAL VALUE

HIGH

REMARKS

REGISTRAR'S SET TO PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE: MACH. UP TO FULL SET FROM FINANCE SERVICES.

RETENTION PERIOD	RETAIN Symbol	RECOMMENDATION Office	Store	Total	Dis'pl	SCHEDULE Office	Store	Total	Dis'pl
	T4	1	4	5	A	1	4	5	A

RETENTION SYMBOLS

C = Current Year
T = Termination
A = Audit

Numbers = No. of years

DISPOSAL SYMBOLS

T = Transfer to Store
D = Destroy
R = Review
A = Transfer to Archives

RECORDS INVENTORY AND APPRAISAL FORM

Table II

GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL

RECORDS CLASSIFICATION

01	CONSTITUTION
02	COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES
03	REGISTRAR
04	REGISTRATION
05	SOLICITOR
06	DISCIPLINE
07	INVESTIGATION
08	EDUCATION
09	EXAMINATIONS
10	OVERSEAS
11	FINANCE
12	ADMINISTRATION
13	PERSONNEL
14	DATA PROCESSING
15	GNC RESEARCH UNIT
16	WELFARE TRUSTEES

GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL

RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE

Department: Acting Registrar - Constitution

Retention Symbols

C = Current Year
T = Termination of transaction or closure of file
A = Audit
P = Permanent not archival

Disposal Symbols

D = Destroy
R = Review
A = Transfer to Archives
M = Microfilm
T = Transfer to Register

Numbers = Number of years
Retained = Retained by department

Revised
26.02.84

GNC Schtp 1

RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION

The attached schedule summarises the details of the records series identified during the compilation of the Inventory of the records of the General Nursing Council. Its purpose is to determine how long each series needs to be retained for departmental use and when it should be destroyed or transferred to the Public Record Office at Kew, to form part of the archives of the General Nursing Council. Each schedule will be submitted to the Head of Department and subsequently to the Acting Registrar for amendment and approval, before it is referred to the Public Record Office for acceptance of those series identified as archival. The following notes may assist in reading the schedules:

Item The numbers in this column link the computer program, the schedule and the inventory sheets, on the basis of which the series will be processed.

Title of Record This column identifies the function or department to which each series belongs, the type and subject matter of the series, the covering dates of records in the series, and the volume of records found measured in cubic feet.

Retention The symbols in the third column, which are listed on the fly-leaf, indicate the point at which records are closed, e.g. T equals Termination of a transaction or closure of a file. The numbers in the columns headed Office and Store, which are totalled in the sixth column, indicate the period during which the series should remain under departmental control. The formula T+0-0-0 signifies that the series should be destroyed or transferred to the PRO when the GNC hands over its functions on 30th June 1983. Where a series identified as archival is still current, the PRO will accept all but the records covering the last five years, which will be transferred as they can be released by the department.

Disposal The symbols in this column, listed on the fly-leaf, indicate how records should be disposed of when they are time expired.

Record Copy This column indicates where the record copy of a particular series is to be found and its disposal, if it is not held in the department to which the schedule refers.

Retained This column indicates the retention period of record copies held in other departments.

Remarks Remarks in this column are intended to assist the PRO to evaluate the relative importance of a records series.

27.04.83

Derek Charman
Consultant Archivist

Item	Title of Record		Retain	Office	Store	Total	Disposal	Record Copy	Retained	Remarks
11001	Finance Advance Letters Dept of Health 1961 - 82	0.5 cu.ft	T+	1	4	5	D	Registrar		
11002	Finance Agendas and Minutes Council and Committees 1973 - 82	11.0 cu.f	C+	2	0	2	D	Registrar		Office Copies
11003	Finance Draft Agendas and Papers Finance Committee 1973 - 79	1.25 cu.f	C+	1	0	1	D			
11004	Finance Agreements Rental and Service 1980 - 82	0.25 cu.f	T+	1	5	6	D			
11005	Finance Assessment Candidates Lists 1982 - 83	1.0 cu.ft	A+	1	0	1	D	Examinations		Destroy after Audit
11006	Finance Circulars National Health 1969 - 73	5.25 cu.f	T+	1	4	5	D	Registrar		
11007	Finance GNC Circulars 1975 - 82	0.5 cu.ft	T+	1	4	5	D	Registrar		

DT 5	Date	Description	Former Reference
This margin not to be used.		GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL	
		Printed Minutes	
1	1920 May 11-1922 Oct 28	Meetings: nos 1-18	
2	1922 Feb 3-1922 Dec 15	Ditto: nos 20-22, 24-31, with special meeting, 6 October 1922	
3	1923 Feb 16-1927 Dec 16	Ditto: nos 32-86 with special meeting, 2 December 1927 Indexed	Volume
4	1928 Jan 20-1932 Dec 16	Ditto: nos 87-141 with special meetings, 21 June 1929 and 11 March 1931 and meeting of Standing Committee of Council, 24 June 1932 Indexed	Volume
5	1933 Jan 27-1937 Dec 17	Ditto: nos 142-198 with special meeting, 10 March 1933 Indexed	Volume
6	1938 Jan 28-1941 Dec 19	Ditto: nos 199-238 with special meetings, 17 March 1938, 10 March 1939 and 9 June 1939 and Emergency Committee meetings, nos 1-3, 27 October 1939, 24 November 1939 and 15 December 1939 See also DT 5/277 Indexed	
7	1942 Jan 23-1945 Dec 21	Signed minutes of meetings: nos 239-282 with special meetings, 10 June 1943, 20 August 1943, 7 September 1944, 7 June 1945	
8	1946 Jan 1-1947 Feb 28	Meetings: Nos 283-294	
		Signed Minutes	
9	1920 May 11-1923 Feb 16	Meetings: nos 1-32 with Emergency meeting, 14 July 1921 and special meeting, 6 October 1922 Indexed to end of 1922 3 parts	Book 1
10	1923 Feb 16-1923 Dec 18	Ditto: nos 32-42 with special meeting, 11 May 1923 Indexed	Book 2

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